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PROTECTING AND PROMOTING RELIGIOUS RIGHTS IN EASTERN EUROPE AND THE SOVIET UNION

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BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE

NINETY-EIGHTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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PROTECTING AND PROMOTING RELIGIOUS RIGHTS IN EASTERN EUROPE AND THE SOVIET UNION

TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 1984

United States Senate,
Committee on Foreign Relations,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:08 p.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Charles H. Percy (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Percy, Murkowski, Pell, and Dodd.

The Chairman. We welcome all of you to what I consider to be one of the most important hearings that we have had in the Foreign Relations Committee. Regretfully, the Senate is in session right now and it looks like there is a vote on. I will have to check on that. We are in secret session on a so-called Star Wars subject, so we will not have as many committee members present as would like to have been here.

I will give my own statement, which is a little longer than usual. We will now hold this hearing on protecting and promoting religious rights in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union here in Washington.

The committee held a hearing on this issue which I chaired in Chicago last November. I found it very useful, informative, and timely. Conditions for religious believers in the Warsaw Pact states were grim and getting worse at that time.

Today the situation is still extremely serious. Therefore, Senator Pell and I decided that we ought to hold this hearing in Washington to receive updated testimony from public witnesses who have important information about the treatment of their co-religionists.

There has been debate about the relative merits of public and private diplomacy to protect and promote religious rights. I am a firm believer that both private and public efforts can be effective. Private diplomacy sometimes can be effective in gaining relief for specific individuals. Public diplomacy may be required in other instances.

In the Senate, the Committee on Foreign Relations has a responsibility to the world community to make the truth known when religious rights are denied and religious freedoms are repressed. Publicity helps bring hope to those who are oppressed and imprisoned. Scrutiny of antireligious activities may help to lessen the repression.

We have seen specific instances where this has occurred. We therefore move in this area in a public session with the certain knowledge that it will do some people some good, without any question.

In this regard, I am pleased to note that representatives of the Voice of America [VOA], Radio Free Europe, and Radio Liberty [RFE/RL] are attending this hearing and plan to broadcast reports on the testimony in the many languages of the peoples of Eastern Europe, the Baltic States, and the Soviet Union.

There is systematic repression of religious believers in the Warsaw Pact states, although the particular circumstances vary from country to country. Throughout the Soviet Union, believers in the Orthodox Church suffer grave problems. Sergei Khodorovich, one of the founders of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Russian Social Fund, for example, was arrested for collecting charity for his church, and he has reportedly been tortured in prison. Alexandr Bogoslovsky, another Russian Orthodox and a renowned historian, has an invitation to join relatives in the United States, but has not yet been allowed to emigrate, and he is facing trial as well.

Baptists and other evangelical Protestants in the Soviet Union suffer continuing harassment. While the Siberian Seven were allowed to emigrate, still there are many more who have not been allowed to do so. I visited with the Siberian Seven in the basement of the Embassy for an hour and a half in November 1980 and I assured them that everything would be done to try to gain their freedom. But I must say, at that particular time I did not have a very high hope. But with the continued pressure that was brought to bear, it became possible for them to be freed.

Also, Catholics in Lithuania, Ukraine, and Byelorussia suffer severe harassment. Leading Lithuanian priests, including Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevicius, are serving long prison terms.

The situation for many others in the Soviet Union also is discouraging. Prisoners of conscience and refuseniks, including Anatoliy Shcharansky, Ida Nudel, Joseph Begun, Lev Elbert, even Vytautas Skuodis and Abe Stolar—both Chicagoans by birth—are still not allowed to emigrate.

Soviet Jews are not allowed to practice their religion freely. The Soviets say it is a crime to study Hebrew. The Soviet Jewish emigration rate has dropped precipitously from a high of 51,000 in 1979 to 1,315 last year. This year the pace of emigration is slower still, with just 303 Jews allowed to leave during the first 4 months of 1984.

And the vile anti-Zionist committee, which spreads anti-Semitic propaganda and makes the outrageous lie that all Jews who desire to emigrate have done so, continues to operate. They did this personally face to face with me when I visited with Brezhnev in November 1980 and I offered to pay for an ad in Pravda, where I wanted the Jews who wanted to emigrate to have their safety guaranteed. I offered to pay for that ad, but the Soviet authorities refused to take the offer.

In Eastern Europe, perhaps the greatest repression of the church occurs in Czechoslovakia, where very few dioceses have resident bishops because the Czechoslovak Government will not permit vacancies to be filled. About 2,000 parishes are without priests. An underground church is bravely making an attempt to maintain religious activities, but at great peril to those who participate.

I just have been notified that I have only 4 minutes to run over to vote. I will leave to cast my vote. We will recess, therefore, for approximately 7 minutes.

[Recess.]

The CHAIRMAN. It is a pleasure to have Senator Murkowski join us.

I will complete my statement. In Poland, Hungary, Romania, and East Germany, while the degree of religious harassment vary, still these governments have not allowed religious freedom. In Romania the Baptists are terribly harassed. Father Kalciu, an Orthodox priest, has spent 16 years in prison and since 1983 there has been no news of any kind about his health.

Given this state of affairs, what is to be done? I have three specific suggestions.

First, as I have said on many occasions, I believe that there should be regular annual summit meetings between the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union. I discussed that in detail with the President this morning in the Cabinet room, with the Vice President and the Secretary of State. I do believe that this is important and I was delighted to be joined by Senator Baker Sunday when he gave a commencement address and mentioned his support of this concept.

We live in a world that is too dangerous for the leaders of the two superpowers who have the capability to destroy the planet not even to meet. We haven't had a meeting between the heads of the Soviet Union and the head of the U.S. Government for 5 years now, and we have not given advice and consent to ratification of a treaty with the Soviet Union on arms control, the most important and paramount issue of our time, in 12 years.

We have two treaties, both supported by Republican Presidents, the Threshold Test Ban Treaty and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty, to which advice and consent has not been given by the Senate, simply because the present administration has not taken a position on these treaties.

I have urged the administration to do so. I have urged that we even adopt a protocol to strengthen verification if that is desirable and necessary, but that we move forward and demonstrate our willingness, when two treaties have been ratified and signed by the respective chiefs of state, that we can advise and consent to ratification of them.

Certainly I am confident that human rights would be on the agenda of a summit meeting, for instance, and President Reagan would make the case emphatically that the Soviet Union has an international commitment and a moral obligation to end its harassment of religious believers once and for all.

It is one thing for the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee to submit, as I do regularly, to either the chief of state or the ambassador or foreign minister of the Soviet Union my concern, my objections, my strong feelings about this subject, but it is quite something else to have world attention focused on a summit meeting and to have the President of the United States take that humanitarian position, which is a position that certainly all free people can stand behind and about which we feel so deeply and so strongly.

Second, I believe that greater contacts between the United States and the people of the Warsaw Pact states are desirable. Therefore, at the November hearing of this committee in Chicago I called upon the administration to renew discussions with the Soviets on reopening the U.S. consulate in Kiev.

A U.S. consulate in Kiev would have great advantage for the United States. I wrote to Secretary of State Shultz to urge him to consider this proposal, pointing out that three of the groups which were represented at the November hearing—the Ukrainian National Association, the Chicago Conference on Soviet Jewry, and Chicago Action for Soviet Jewry—all agreed with me that the consulate would serve U.S. interests in the Ukraine.

Secretary of State Shultz wrote back to say that: "I strongly agree that an American consulate would provide many advantages," and it is now a topic in our dialog with the Soviets. I will of course want to pose this quesiton to our witnesses, and I will transmit their views to the Department of State.

Third and finally, I want to take this opportunity to urge all nationality and religious groups to work together whenever possible in a nonpartisan, interfaith effort to promote religious freedom in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Last November, I founded an interfaith group called the Advisory Council on Religious Rights in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Presidents Ford and Carter are the honorary national cochairmen, and former Secretaries of State Rusk, Rogers, Vance, and Haig are among our founding members.

Religious freedom is basic to the American tradition, and a fundamental right specified in many international agreements. It is really time now for the governments of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to live up to the pledges that they have repeatedly made.

Senator Murkowski, we are delighted to have you with us. Do you have any opening comments?

Senator **Murkowski**. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I think you have a lengthy group of witnesses here today, and I certainly agree with your statement with regard to the importance of this hearing and the fact that you have previously accommodated these and other groups in Chicago.

I think what will be attempted here by establishing a record on the importance of freedom of religion througout the world is commendable, and I certainly share your enthusiasm for the meaningful and productive testimony that we are about to hear.

I thank you.

The **Chairman**. Thank you very much indeed. I know that your interest in this field is very great.

Senator Pressler is unable to be here this morning, but has requested his statement be made a part of the record. Without objection, the statement will be inserted at this point.

[Senator Pressler's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. LARRY PRESSLER

Mr. Chairman, we are here to study a problem that is appalling. The peoples of Eastern Europe and the Communist bloc continue to experience extensive religious oppression. It is a plain fact that the freedom of religion we enjoy in the West is notoriously absent in Communist bloc nations. At a time of growing religious expression among many Eastern Europeans, persecution and harassment by Communist authorities continues unabated.

Even though the degree of oppression varies from country to country, pressure exists on Catholics, Baptists, Jews, the Russian Orthodox and others alike. The greatest persecution occurs among the peoples of Czechoslovakia, the Jews of the Soviet Union, the Catholics of Lithuania and Poland, and the Protestants of East Germany. There is no separation of church and state, but rather a persistent Communist commitment to the destruction of organized religion. This situation has reached desperate proportions for the millions of believers who are denied free expression of their religious faith.

This problem is most evident in the most obvious violator of personal freedom—the Soviet Union. The plight of the Soviet Jews is a tragic story. Anti-semitic material is appearing more frequently in the Soviet media, while Jewish enrollment in higher education is declining rapidly. Jewish culture and literature are effectively banned, and contact between Jews in the U.S.S.R. and citizens from the West is severely restricted. Finally, Jewish emigration has sharply declined from 51,000 in 1979 to 1,300 in 1983.

The Roman Catholic Church of Lithuania continues to face destructive harassment. Cases have been documented of Lithuanian citizens who collect church money being arrested, physically beaten, and in some cases sentenced to labor camps. The KGB and other Soviet police organizations have knowingly arrested clergy and tried to outlaw all religious gatherings.

Mr. Chairman, the facts presented here are clear. The current state of religious expression in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is disastrous. It is imperative that we continue to communicate to repressive regimes that the present situation is unacceptable to the United States Government and to civilized, religious people throughout the world.

The CHAIRMAN. Because we have gotten off to a late start, because of the floor vote, and because we have three full panels this afternoon, I am going to ask that our panelists keep their oral statements to 5 minutes. The full text of your statements will be incorporated into the record and will be printed and distributed. This will enable us to have the maximum amount of time for a free and open discussion.

We will observe the lights right here in front of my chair. These are the same lights that we use to limit the time of Senators. The yellow light will go on at 4 minutes, and when the red light appears, your time has expired.

The first panel will consist of experts that we have put together on regional religious issues. Would you be good enough to take your places at the witness table, please. Our witnesses are: Dr. William Korey, International Council of B'nai B'rith, New York, NY; and Dr. Ernest Gordon, President of Christian Rescue Effort for the Emancipation of Dissidents [CREED], of Alexandria, VA.

Mr. Korey, would you be good enough to begin.

[Mr. Korey's biographical data follows:]

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF WILLIAM KOREY

B.A. University of Chicago.

M.A. Ph.D. Columbia University, certificate of Russian Institute.

Taught at: Columbia University, City College of New York, Brooklyn College, Yeshiva University and YIVO (Status of Lecturer, Associate Professor, Visiting Professor).

Currently: Director, International Policy Research, B'nai B'rith.

Awards and Honors: Ford Foundation Faculty Fellowship, Carnegie Research Grant Fund for the Republic "America Traditions Contest" Winner, "Guest Scholar," Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (1983).

Author: "The Soviet Cage: Anti-Semitism in Russia" (Viking Press) Introduction, "Eleanor Roosevelt, Her Day" by D. Gurewitsch (N.Y. Times/Quadrangle) "The Key to Human Rights" (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.) "Human Rights and the Helsinki Accord" (Foreign Policy Association.)

Essays of his have appeared in a number of books published by Columbia University Press, Oxford University Press, Praeger, Sabra Press and in Encyclopaedia Judaica

His articles have appeared in Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, Problems of Communism, Slavic Review, Saturday Review, Commentary, Midstream, The New Leader, The New Republic, Freedom At Issue, International Conciliation Society, The Washington Quarterly, the Op. Ed. pages of The New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles, Times, Wall Street Journal, Newsday. Also in Reform Judaism, Hadassah Magazine, Present Tense, Jewish Monthly.

Read Papers: At various scholarly bodies including the American Historical Association; the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies; and the American Society of International Law.

Testified on Human Rights: To various Congressional bodies and U.N. organs.

STATEMENT OF DR. WILLIAM KOREY, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL POLICY RESEARCH, INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF B'NAI B'RITH, NEW YORK, NY

Mr. Korey. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I have focused in my paper, and in my remarks I will continue that focus, upon the broader definition of Jews. They are not merely regarded as a religious community, but when we are dealing specifically and especially with the Soviet Union they are an ethnic community, a national community by virtue of Soviet law. So that my remarks will be oriented not merely to the deprivations that Jews suffer in the religious field, but in the broader area of national, culture, and even civic rights.

The plight of Soviet Jews has reached crisis proportions which warrant the urgent attention of the international community. The last Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in 1981 was told by 127 leading Soviet Jewish activists that they face "the threat of a national catastrophe." Today that Cassandra-like vision looms as a challenge to the conscience of mankind.

There are five critical aspects which I will deal with briefly concerning the Soviet Jewish plight: (1) anti-Semitism in the Soviet mass media; (2) anti-Jewish discrimination in higher education and employment; (3) the official drive against the study and teaching of Hebrew and Jewish history; (4) the current attempt to sever links between Soviet Jews and their brethren abroad; and (5) the virtual halting of Jewish emigration.

Mr. Chairman, you made reference to the anti-Semitic campaign in the Soviet Union, so I will be fairly brief. It masquerades as anti-Zionism, but in fact it is the Jews, Jewish tradition, and Jewish culture which is the target. The holiest Jewish books, the Torah and the Talmud, are presented as the very embodiment of evil, and Jews of the West are presented as the owners and controllers of the banks and the press and the manipulators of Free Masonry, all designed to corrupt and debase the world and to take over the world.

Such notions spring from obviously the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, and it is not accidental that a book was published a couple of years ago in the Soviet Union by a man named Lev Korneyev, and this book, The Class Essence of Zionism, which was hailed by Izvestiia in January 1983 as authoritative, this book has as one of its principal sources a notorious Tsarist anti-Semite.

And it is not accidental that even nowadays Tsarist pogroms against Jews are being reinterpreted and given an indirect approval. Very recently, early this year in January, Pravda dismayingly equated Zionism with Hitlerism and racism. Dual loyalty and genocide were seen as the basic feature of this Jewish philosophy.

Most recently, the world was presented with the extraordinary and shocking anti-Semitic thrust in the repression of Andrei Sakharov. The focus was on his wife, Yelena Bonner, who was defined in the Soviet press as a Zionist agent, the object of which was the classic purpose of bigotry, namely of scapegoating and diverting public attention from the ruthless repression of Sakharov.

Anti-Jewish discrimination in higher education is rather extraordinary. There has been a cutback in the course of the past 10 years of approximately 50 percent in the admission enrollment of Jews in higher education and in postgraduate studies.

On the level of culture and on the level of religion, the Jews have been subjected to crippling blows. In contrast to other ethnic groups in Soviet society, Jewish institutional life has all but been obliterated, while Judaism has been subject to special disabilities which do not apply to the other major recognized religions of Soviet Russia.

It is supremely ironic that in the U.S.S.R., with some 2½ million Jews, there is not a single seminary institution for the training of rabbis. There is a Yeshiva, but it has no rabbinical students. And it is an extraordinary fact of life that of the half a dozen rabbis that are today in the Soviet Union, half of them were trained in Budapest, Hungary.

The current number of Soviet rabbis together with the total number of synagogues, about 55, is a tragic commentary upon a once-flourishing tradition.

There is a determined effort to sever all relations between Soviet Jews and Jews in the Western World. Congressman Benjamin Gilman has documented the fact that mail has been cut off, and I would like to think that at the forthcoming meeting of the Universal Postal Union these efforts to sever the links between Soviet Jews and Western Jews will be aired in a public way.

Mr. Chairman, you made reference to the emigration phenomenon, the sharp decline, the horrendous decline in emigration, with the argument made that Soviet Jews no longer want to leave. We know for a fact that some 400,000 Soviet Jews have received from relatives in Israel at their own request affidavits.

The crackdown on emigration stands in violation of fundamental international accords to which the Soviet Union is committed, including the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Helsinki Final Act, and the Madrid Agreement of September 1983.

The international civilized community must insist upon adherence to these norms. Both open forums and quiet diplomacy should be employed to press the Kremlin on this issue. Any agenda of

East-West discussions must ineluctably include this vital human rights demand.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

[Dr. Korey's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. WILLIAM KOREY

The plight of Soviet Jews has reached crisis proportions which warrants the urgent attention of the international community. The last Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in 1981 was told by 127 leading Soviet Jewish activists that they face "the threat of a national catastrophe." Today, that Cassandra-like vision looms as a challenge to the conscience of mankind.

Five critical aspects of the Soviet Jewish plight will be examined here: (1) anti-Semitism in the Soviet mass media; (2) anti-Jewish discrimination in higher education and employment; (3) the official drive against the study and teaching of the Hebrew language and Jewish history; (4) the current attempt to sever links between Soviet Jews and their brethren abroad; and (5) the virtual halting of Jewish emigration.

The Kremlin's massive media campaign against Jewry masquerades as anti-Zionism but the target is patently evident. The holiest Jewish books—the Torah and Talmud—are presented in the most vulgar fashion as the embodiment and source of unprecedented evil. Jews of the West are presented as seeking to dominate the world through control of banks and the press, and the manipulation of Free Masonry.

The obvious inspiration for such disturbing themes in the media is the notorious Tsarist forgery, "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion." Indeed, an important recent Soviet work by Lev Korneyev, designed for the training of Communist Party ideologists and propagandists and lauded by Izvestiia in January 1983 as authoritative, cited as a crucial source an infamous Tsarist anti-Semite. Even the Tsarist pogroms against Jews are being reinterpreted and given an indirect approval, while the Holocaust of the Nazi epoch is either minimized or obscenely attributed to so-called Zionist collusion with Hitler. A major article in Pravda in this past January dismayingly equated Zionism with Hitlerism. Racism, dual loyalty, and genocide were seen as the basic features of the distinctive Jewish philosophy.

In the course of the past few weeks, the world was witness to a shocking new anti-Semitic thrust in the Soviet media with its depiction of Andrei Sakharov's wife, Yelena Bonner, as a "Zionist agent" who somehow managed to manipulate the distinguished scientist. Bigotry here has the classic purpose of scapegoating and diverting public attention from the ruthless repression of Sakharov.

Anti-Jewish discrimination in higher education is particularly disturbing for Soviet Jewish youth who now must envisage a future of severely limited opportunities. Data on the admission of Jews to universities and postgraduate studies show an incredible 50 percent decline during the past decade. Samizdat information reveals Jewish applicants are given especially difficult oral examinations in order to weed them out. The inevitable result is a sharp drop in the number of Jews annually entering the scientific professions while the "security" professions of diplomacy and the military are practically "Judenrein."

Jewish culture and tradition in the U.S.S.R. have been subjected crippling blows. In contrast to the other ethnic groups of Soviet society, Jewry has seen its institutional life all but obliterated while Judaism has been plagued by special disabilities which do not apply to the other major recognized religions of Soviet Russia. It is supremely ironic that the U.S.S.R. with some 2½ million Jews has no means for the training of rabbis and has had to obtain half of its approximately half-dozen rabbis from Hungary where only some 70,000 Jews reside. The current total number of Soviet rabbis together with the total number of synagogues—about 55—is a tragic commentary upon a once-flourishing tradition.

To fill the vacuum, Jews have organized self-study groups to learn Hebrew and Jewish history. But these groups are today being threatened and intimidated by the authorities. The official press has warned that the teaching and study of Hebrew border on the subversive. Indeed, recently, the principal organizer of Jewish self-study groups—Iosif Begun—was given a 12-year sentence. Besides, self-study classes have all too often been dispersed and books confiscated.

Accompanying the drive to obliterate Jewish consciousness is an intensified effort to cut the links between Jews in the West and Jews in the U.S.S.R. Mail from abroad, for example, in great numbers do not reach their destination, a fact recently documented at length by Congressman Benjamin Gilman. Hopefully, this matter along with other related issues will be on the agenda of the conference of the Universal Postal Union when it meets in Hamburg on June 18–July 27. Besides the interference with the mail, Soviet authorities strive through media warnings to intimidate Soviet Jews from having any contacts with Western Jews.

Even as the human rights conditions of Soviet Jews profoundly worsen, they find it virtually impossible to join their family and kin abroad. Monthly emigration figures have plunged to the negligible levels of over two decades ago. At the present rate, it can be expected that less than 1,000 will emigrate in 1984. If Soviet authorities claim that Jews do not wish to emigrate, the realitiy is otherwise—nearly 400,000 Soviet Jews have requested and received vizov (affidavits) from relatives in Israel, which is the first step in the emigration process. In addition, about 10,000 Jews have been refused exit visas at least once and some have been waiting for over a dozen years for approval of the their visa applications.

The crackdown on emigration stands in violation of fundamental international accords to which the U.S.S.R. is committed, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Helsinki Final Act and the Madrid Agreement (September 1983). The international civilized community must insist upon adherence to these norms. Both open forums and quiet diplomacy should be employed to press the Kremlin on the issue. Any agenda of East-West discussions must ineluctably include this vital human rights demand.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOVIET JEWRY
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1983: THE YEAR OF YURI ANDROPOV -- IMPLICATIONS FOR SOVIET JEWS

Andropov's first year in power marked the solidification of a shift in policy toward Soviet Jews, first noted in the closing months of the Brezhnev era. The policy involved: 1) an effort to end emigration; 2) an intensification of forced cultural and linguistic assimilation; 3) the broadening of an "anti-Zionist" propaganda campaign, drawing into it anti-Semitic elements that have their origin in 19th century Russian canards and 20th century neo-Nazi themes; and 4) the severing of contacts between Soviet Jews and Jews abroad.

In addition new restrictive laws were introduced, which resulted in the increased harassment of Jews trying to emigrate or practice their religious and cultural heritage. The new measures appear to be an effort by the Soviet leadership to tighten its handling of political "offenders," much as Andropov has attempted to close loopholes in the economic system.

Jewish Emigration Virtually Halted

The radical decline in emigration, begun during Brezhnev's final years, continued under his successor, Yuri Andropov, dropping to its lowest point since the late sixties. In 1983, 1,314 Jews left the Soviet Union, at a monthly average of about 100 people. During the peak year of 1979 over 4,000 left each month. The total for 1982 was 2,688.

The creation in April of an "Anti-Zionist Committee of the Soviet Public" suggested that the authorities may have decided to revoke the de facto claim of Jews to repatriation to their homeland, Israel. If so, this would leave the narrowly defined concept of family reunification as a basis for emigrating and, with the new limitations restricted to "first degree" relatives in Israel able to send affidavits to begin the process, the number of Jews eligible was drastically reduced. At a June press conference the Committee insisted that no more Jews wished to leave, calling evidence that thousands still sought permission "a juggling of figures by Zionist propaganda."

The alleged lack of interest was refuted by the Soviet Jewry Research Bureau, the research arm of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, which cited contrary statistics. According to the Bureau, over 300,000 Jews had asked relatives in Israel to send the invitations ("vizovs") needed to apply for emigration before Soviet authorities began blocking such invitations.

This situation was presaged by Valery Tarasov two years ago, in his book, Sit on a Stone by the Road. Commenting in an afterword to this fictional account of ill-fated emigrants in Israel, Lev Korneyev, a notorious "specialist" on the Middle East, and the most prolific anti-Semitic author in the USSR, claimed that current applicants were subverting the process of family reunification and implied they would face similar troubles; he made no mention of repatriation. Significantly, the wording used by the Committee was that "family reunification" had "essentially been completed."

More recently, Victor Louis, a journalist who writes for Western media and is known for his ties to the KGB, signaled that "mass Jewish emigration" from the USSR had "come to an end." Writing on April 20 for the Israeli newspaper Yediot Aharonot, he sought to justify the cut-off by raising the "drop-out" issue, in which emigrants with Israeli documents choose destinations other than Israel upon their arrival in Vienna.

Composed of "Soviet citizens of Jewish nationality," some of whom have been used in the past as spokesmen for the regime, the "Anti-Zionist Committee" emphasized the inherently "Soviet" nature of Jews living in the USSR, which may portend a heightened attempt at encouraging assimilation. Due to its distinctly Jewish membership, it should be seen as an institutionalized effort to foster an impression of legitimacy, in response to continued Western criticism of Soviet emigration practices.

The Committee was in further disrepute when information became available that its leader, General David Dragunsky, a retired officer, had been involved in "anti-Zionist" activities long before the Committee was formed. His signature was discovered on a diploma awarded to a PLO mercenary from an Odessa military academy in 1976, and on a 1952 "petition" calling for Stalin's aborted "relocation" of the Soviet Jewish population to eastern Siberia. He is also known to have gone on "truth missions" to the West, to try to persuade listeners that Jews in the USSR suffer "no discrimination."

Significantly, the Committee reportedly set up offices in a number of regional centers and other cities, notably in the Latvian capital of Riga. Considered one of the birthplaces of the contemporary Jewish national and emigration movements, Riga is particularly vulnerable to official propaganda efforts because, over the years, the Jewish activist leadership has largely left for Israel. The authorities may also be seeking to reverse the city's previously high emigration rate. It should be noted that a resurgence of latent anti-Semitism in Riga, as a by-product of the Committee's anti-"Zionist" exhortations, cannot be discounted. Other Committee outposts vulnerable to outbreaks of anti-Semitsm are the Ukrainian capital of Kiev and the Byelorussian capital of Minsk.

New Measures Introduced

Related measures made the arduous process of applying to emigrate increasingly difficult. A decree, first introduced in Moscow, rendered visa applications invalid after six months, a period of time during which Soviet bureaucratic wheels barely begin to turn. As a result, applicants will be forced to repeat the lengthy and painful procedure at regular intervals.

Vulnerable to dismissal from their jobs once they have submitted their documents to the visa office, Jews trying to emigrate were further threatened by a new nation-wide "Redundancy Law," enacted as part of Andropov's crackdown on corruption. Intended to streamline a "top-heavy bureaucracy," it encourages the firing of individuals in managerial positions. Once fired, the chances of imprisonment are increased. A third statute was tightened so that a person out of work for only two months, rather than the previous four, can be tried as a "parasite," a charge leveled against prospective emigrants in the past who have had to leave their jobs. Jews applying to leave are thus being forced into a no-win trap in which the likelihood of imprisonment has intensifed.

Statistics Analyzed

The new measures had their greatest impact on the capital, where the number of Jews allowed to leave during the year plunged to less than 10% of 1982's total. Once the leading city for emigration, Moscow now ranks well behind other major cities and outlying regions. In the past eleven months, fewer than fifty people were processed through its visa office. By contrast, roughly 250 individuals left from the Baltic region, and the southern Ukrainian city of Odessa, respectively -- representing close to 40% of the total emigration for the year. Aside from the latter, which actually registered an increase in emigration, the flow from other major cities (Leningrad, Kiev) and regions (the Baltic and Central Asian republics, Georgia, and Moldavia) was more than cut in half. Two outlying centers with significant Jewish populations, Minsk, and the Ukrainian town of Kharkov -- site of an unofficial "Jewish University" -- were virtually shut down.

Prisoner's Situation Deteriorates

Seven men were imprisoned for activities connected with their trying to emigrate to Israel or improve Jewish life in the Soviet Union. Two of them were sentenced to additional terms after having completed their sentences in prison, labor camp or internal exile: twenty-six year-old Simon Shnirman was sentenced to a second term for "draft evasion," and veteran activist Iosif Begun was slapped with a harsh 12-year sentence after a trial for a new "crime."

The possibility of re-sentencing for others still incarcerated increased when a new law against "opposition" to penal authorities was instituted in October. Carrying up to five additional years for "especially dangerous recidivists" or those convicted of a "grave crime," the measure codified a Stalinist practice that had been increasingly applied to political prisoners in recent years. Jewish Prisoner of Conscience Anatoly Shcharansky, for example, was sent from a labor camp three years ago, where he had served time in a "punishment cell," to Chistopol Prison for refusing to acknowledge his "guilt." Past experience, and the present assault on Jewish emigration, make those jailed for trying to advance matters of Jewish concern particularly vulnerable.

Treatment of prisoners, meanwhile, violated official norms. Visits with relatives, and the sending and receiving of mail were denied without explanation. Lack of adequate food, clothing, shelter and medical care, coupled with periods of isolation, extended interrogation and heavy manual labor, became commonplace. Some of the labor, moreover, was reportedly exploited in extensive projects to boost the Soviet economy.

Those imprisoned during the past year for their involvement in the Jewish emigration and cultural movements came from large urban centers, such as Moscow, as well as remote villages. Nineteen year-old Aleksandr Panarev of Sukhumi, Georgia, a refusenik for over half his life, was sentenced to a year in prison, in an attempt to hinder his family's emigration efforts. In an unusual move, the same charge was used against an older refusenik, Kiev's 35-year old Lev Elbert, who had already completed his military service. Additional charges against Elbert for smuggling "illegal drugs" were dropped for lack of evidence, and after support for him was demonstrated in other countries.

A chemist from Kharkov, active in its unofficial "Jewish University," Yuri Tarnopolsky was given three years in a labor camp for "defaming the Soviet state." He is the author of "Description of a Disease," an article describing the plight of refuseniks. Moscow mathematicians Boris Kanevsky and Valery Senderov were tried for documenting anti-Semitic admissions practices at Moscow University. In what some saw as a message for non-Jews not to associate with Jewish activists Senderov, a Russian, received the harsher sentence. He drew seven years in a labor camp and five years internal exile for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda," while Kanevsky was given five years internal exile for "defaming the Soviet state."

Crackdown on Jewish Culture Intensified; Law Used as Weapon

Perhaps the most unsettling verdict was that levied against Iosif Begun. The one-time mathematican, who became a qualified, but unlicensed Hebrew teacher, was sentenced to the maximum of seven years in a labor camp and five years internal exile for "anti-Soviet agitation." The verdict accused him of "committing an especially dangerous crime" while "following instructions of foreign Zionist centers. . .directed at causing a disintegration of the Soviet regime." Begun had been trying to emigrate to Israel since 1971.

The verdict echoed a flagship article published shortly after the Anti-Zionist Committee's formation. On April 19 and 20 the Leningrad daily, Leningradskaya Pravda, printed a lengthy two-part feature that attacked private Hebrew teaching circles as "subversive." This was the first time that the private and unofficial Hebrew and Jewish history groups, sporadically harassed over the past several years, were formally declared antithetical to Soviet law. In a blatant assault on the core of Judaism, especially the Torah and the Talmud, and on Hebrew, the traditional and historic language of Jews, the Jewish heritage was pronounced devoid of "cultural" value due to its "exclusively political" -- i.e. "Zionist" -- nature. Such a formulation recycled the anti-Semitic myth of Jews as power hungry schemers with no roots, harking back to Stalin's attacks on Jews as "rootless cosmopolitans."

Official Channels Given Slight Boost

Significantly, none of the Committee's initial members were associated with the remnant of official Jewish cultural life in the USSR built around the small Yiddish journal Sovietish Heimland, or the tiny Yiddish establishment in the remote region of Birobidzhan.

These and other sanctioned channels of Jewish expression, however, were given a slight boost in an apparent effort to create the impression that Jewish culture is available in the USSR, while masking the reality of harassment. Accordingly, in what appears to be a diversionary tactic, Yiddish -- a language now spoken by less than 15% of Soviet Jews and not relevant to contemporary Soviet Jewry -- is emphasized as "the Jewish language," whereas Hebrew, the only tongue that has united Jews as a people through the centuries, remains suppressed.

Yiddish projects included the publication of the first primer since World War II, and the setting up of an advanced study course at Moscow's Gorky Institute of Literature open only to "politically acceptable" individuals. Printed in the remote Birobidzhan region, the primer was issued in 10,000 copies, equal to the entire Jewish population of the area, where less than one half of one percent of Soviet Jews live. A 40,000 word Russian-Yiddish dictionary is reportedly scheduled for publication in several months.

In December, foreign press and diplomats were invited to a semi-official Yiddish musical based on Sholem Aleichem's "Tevyeh the Milkman" and its Broadway adaptation, "Fiddler on the Roof." The show was limited to two performances in an old, isolated theater south of Moscow. Despite this, hundreds of Jews came to the performances.

The Soviet Union's chief rabbi, Yakov L. Fishman, died in June at age 70. Designated by the authorities as the chief religious spokesman for Jews in the USSR, he was never formally ordained and did not graduate from any recognized religious training program. He steered a careful path during the course of his largely ceremonial career, never criticizing or deviating from official policy. Shortly before his death, he read a speech on Soviet television endorsing the Anti-Zionist Committee. His successor, 44 year-old Adolf Shayevich, did undergo religious preparation. A 1981 graduate of a Budapest rabbinical seminary -- the only Jewish seminary in the Soviet bloc -- he is the first of two Soviet citizens to have completed its program. The second, Menachem Nidel of Riga, graduated in March and returned to his native city, where he became the first rabbi to serve in 22 years. There are estimated to be over 50 functioning synagogues in the Soviet Union, serviced by a handful of rabbis.

Hebrew Teachers Harassed

Meanwhile, unofficial Hebrew teachers, including Grigory Vasserman, Yakov Gorodetsky and Aba Taratuta, were denounced in the press. For other teachers, denunciation was translated into action. The repercussions in Odessa, a city noted for its harassment of Jewish activists, were particularly severe. On May 4 plainclothes agents disrupted a gathering at the home of refusenik Yakov Mesh, photographed everyone present, and confiscated all Hebrew language materials. The apartment of fellow Hebrew teacher Mark Nepomniashchy was searched on the same day. Mesh was subsequently threatened with permanent refusal unless he publicly repudiated his activities; he declined the offer.

A new measure introduced as part of Andropov's anti-corruption campaign greatly increased the likelihood of harassment for citizens. Pre-printed "signal cards," designed for anonymous responses, appeared in a test run in Krasnodar, a city south of Moscow. Reminiscent of the unsigned denunciations during the Stalin era, they include an open-ended violation incorporating any disturbance "of social order or the rules of socialist society" under which Jewish religious and cultural activities can be conveniently classified. Another category is lack of work -- a signal for "parasitism," with which Hebrew teachers and jobless refuseniks have frequently been charged.

"Fifth Column"

Ominously, the forced assimilation is combined with insinuations of inherent Jewish disloyalty. The Leningradskaya Pravda article described Jews seeking their roots as a "fifth column in our country," a term harking back to the Tsarist Black Hundreds. Discriminatory practices like those exposed by Kanevsky and Senderov, registering an alarming increase in recent years, reveal the practical effects of such canards. Jews are thus placed in a classic bind: denied their own heritage, they are also portrayed as potential traitors and refused the benefits of conformity, or the ability to leave.

Some measure of conformity to a Russified norm was suggested for all Soviet ethnic groups at a Soviet Communist Party Central Committee plenum in June. A Russian, Grigory Romanov, was elected to the Party Secretariat, thus preserving the overwhelming Russian dominance of that body. Wheels also began turning to enforce a greater emphasis on the Russian language in primary and secondary schools throughout the fifteen republics. Four days after the close of the year, on January 4, 1984, the Soviet news agency TASS announced an overhaul of the Soviet school system, in which all children, regardless of their mother tongue, would be required to master Russian by the time they finish high school.

The growth of Russian cultural influence could elevate elements of society which are known to be xenophobic. The phenomenon has particular relevance for Jews, who are regarded by such elements as "alien" products of a foreign, Western civilization.

Massive Propaganda Effort

The most disturbing aspect of Andropov's Jewish policy concerns the call in an "appeal" issued by the Anti-Zionist Committee for a massive propaganda effort aimed at the "political unmasking of Zionism." What is striking about the Kremlin's perception of Zionism, as reflected in this campaign, is the enormity of the "power" and "evil" with which it is ostensibly endowed. Lifted from the Tsarist forgery, "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion," the propaganda drive thinly masks overt anti-Semitism. Judaism is seen as the source of "Zionist evil": the Torah and the Talmud are presented as works preaching racism, hatred and violence. The Committee's June 6 press conference signaled a heightened onslaught of the media offensive. In a particularly vicious attack, Chairman Dragunsky labeled Zionism a "man-hating ideology" based on "the ideas and methods of Hitler."

That same month, a lurid cartoon appeared in the widely read Ukrainian satire magazine, Peretz. The drawing, headed "Israeli Conquerors in Lebanon," insinuated that Jews were in collusion with Hitler to destroy their own people. It depicted several figures identified as Jews by symbols, stereotypical racist features and clothing, sitting on a tank and poring over a map labeled "Concentration camps 1933 - 1945 -- AUSCHWITZ, MAIDENEK, BUCHENWALD." The caption read: "Start building the camps according to the models already tried." A verbal counterpart to the cartoon, evoking the atrocious blood libel myth used against Jews under the Tsars, had appeared earlier, again in Leningradskaya Pravda. Inciting the public, Israeli soldiers fresh with "the still warm blood of Beirut" were described as having "disemboweled pregnant women with their bayonets and killed children and old men and women with their knives."

Much in the propaganda campaign is drawn from a newly published book by Lev Korneyev entitled The Class Essence of Zionism, which was favorably reviewed in the Soviet press. Korneyev acknowledged, for the first time, an ideological debt to a Tsarist anti-Semite who claimed that Zionist agents provoked pogroms in order to increase Jewish emigration to what was then called Palestine, the implication being that today's "Zionist agents" are conducting themselves in a similar manner. Korneyev's recent writings, frequently published in official military indoctrination pamphlets, introduced another hate-filled theme: in declaring the Holocaust a "myth of Zionist propaganda," he borrowed from current neo-Nazi and neo-fascist revisionist doctrine, arguing that the figure of six million Jews killed is a gross exaggeration. These allegations were repudiated in an unusual protest by a Russian scholar, Ivan Fyodorovich Martynov. Martynov, who is not Jewish, renounced his academic title, equivalent to a PhD, in an open letter to the Presidium of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, asking that Korneyev be expelled from the scientific community as a "professionally bankrupt ignoramous."

The propaganda effort was broadened to include material specifically directed at Western audiences. This move was signaled by the Anti-Zionist Committee's initial "appeal," which, in an apparent reaction to Western protests, deliberately included "anti-Semitism" with Zionism as a "form of chauvinism" rejected by the Soviet Union.

A major campaign tool was a Ukrainian made film, "Babi Yar: the Lessons of History," which was sent to a wide variety of Western outlets, including research centers and private individuals engaged in tracking down Nazi war criminals. Narrated in near flawless English, its "anti-Zionist" message is subtle compared to that of Soviet propaganda geared for internal consumption: only a few telltale lines, uttered in a matter-of-fact tone, are inserted into the almost hour long film. Without citing any specific examples of Israeli policy, the film speaks of "rabid nationalism" as manifested by "anti-Semitism, apartheid and Zionism," implying that "today Zionists are ready to embrace" horrors like Babi Yar. Its most insinuating line promises that "Those who escape punishment must fear you, the people who are watching this film right now."

Contacts Cut

Hand in hand with claims denying the presence of anti-Semitism in the USSR, the concurrent severence of a relationship between Soviet Jews and Jews abroad was proposed. In March the Committee claimed that "Soviet Jews reject with contempt attempts by Zionist propagandists to interfere in their life", and that "citizens of the USSR who are Jews are an inseparable part of the Soviet people." Soviet Jews were thus warned against having contacts with their "Zionist" brethren in the West. This policy has been implemented by the interception of mail, protestations concerning the presence of American diplomats at Moscow's Central Synagogue, and by periodic news accounts in Leningrad and Moscow which accused Western Jewish tourists of "Zionist provocations."

The interception of mail, documented by testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Postal Operations, has a crippling ramification beyond isolating the addressees. With regard to emigration, Soviet authorities insist that only invitations which arrive through the international mail can be used in the application procedure. Their control of the mail allows them to ration invitations as they choose.

Contacts have been further hindered by the harassment of foreign tourists. A Leningradskaya Pravda message to Soviet Jews concerning the dangers of Western visitors' attempts at "subversion," along with similar warnings in other publications, including Ogonek, were implemented by frequent surveillance and occasional interrogation of foreigners. This was exacerbated by lengthy, arbitrary customs inspections encouraged by a new restrictive border law instituted on March 1.

Vital professional contacts have also been denied Soviet Jews. Armen Kachaturyan, a professor of physics and mathematics at the Institute of Crystallography in Moscow, and his wife, Svetlana, also a professor of physics and mathematics, were refused permission to attend a one-week scientific parley on the island of Crete in June. Kachaturyan, who was to deliver the keynote address as a representative of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, has been waiting with his family over two years to emigrate to Israel.

Some limited channels of contact, however, were open. At the Fourth Moscow International Book Fair in September, an American Jewish Book Publishers' stand attracted tens of thousands of Jews from all over the country, despite the fact that the Fair coincided with the Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashana). Although 49 of the group's titles were barred this year, over three times the number barred at the Fair in 1981, ten thousand copies of a catalogue that included information about the Jewish faith, a Jewish calendar, and a prayer, were distributed. The Israeli booth was also well attended.

U.S. Response

World response to the hard line taken by Andropov in his multi-faceted policy toward Soviet Jews has been significant. Prompted by the crisis in emigration, over 1,600 delegates from 32 countries gathered for a Third International Conference on Soviet Jewry in March, in Jerusalem. President Ronald Reagan, in a message to the Jerusalem Conference delivered by U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Jeane Kirkpatrick, affirmed support for the "just cause" of Soviet Jews, who should "know that we will not forget them." Reagan asserted that the plight of Soviet Jewry will remain a key issue at major international forums. On June 15, Secretary of State George P. Shultz met with the NCSJ, the Conference of Presidents, and several of their member agency presidents, to discuss the worsening situation facing Soviet Jews, and the Administration's policy.

Follow-up meetings to the Jerusalem Conference were held in October with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and in November with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

One of the most important forums was the 3-year long Madrid Review Conference on the Helsinki Final Act, which concluded in the fall. The agreement reached represents a cautious step forward for human rights, including those of Soviet Jews. Such advances include a conference of experts on the reunion of families, to be held under the rubric of "human contacts," in Bern, Switzerland in April, 1986, and a conference on human rights to take place in Ottawa, Canada in May, 1985. The signatories pledged to "favorably deal with" applications for family reunification, deciding upon them "within six months" and, in the event of an official refusal, to inform applicants of "their right to renew applications after reasonably short intervals."

Another pledge concerned the right to religious freedom. The signatories in Madrid vowed to "ensure the freedom of the individual to profess. . .alone or in community with others, religion or belief." It was further stipulated that religious organizations be allowed to "develop contacts among themselves and exchange information." Representing the U.S., Ambassador Max M. Kampelman secured a unified Western coalition through his persistent advocacy and determined leadership.

In the U.S. Congress, both houses continued to participate actively. One fresh sign of commitment is that all eighty new members of the House joined the 98th Congressional Class for Soviet Jewry, co-chaired by Representatives Mel Levine (D-CA) and Steve Bartlett (R-TX). Following the Anti-Zionist Committee's June press conference, a record number of House members -- 375 -- signed a forceful letter to Andropov deploring the attempts "of your government to misrepresent the issue of Jewish emigration." The letter was initiated by Representatives Sidney Yates (D-IL) and Bill Gradison (R-OH). A similar letter initiated in the Senate by Christopher J. Dodd (D-CT) and Rudy Boschwitz (R-MN) was signed by 86 of their colleagues.

In an unprecedented move, 98 Senators rallied to the support of Iosif Begun in letters addressed to President Reagan, Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin and Secretary of State George Shultz. Initiated by Nevada Republican Paul Laxalt and Louisiana Democrat J. Bennett Johnston, the bipartisan appeals expressed concern regarding "the cultural genocide directed against the Soviet Jewish minority."

The Congressional Wives for Soviet Jewry stepped up its activities. Since its establishment in 1978, the group has met with Administration officials, representatives from foreign nations, and relatives of Soviet Jewish refuseniks and Prisoners of Conscience. On November 28th, a meeting was held with Shulamit Shamir, wife of the Israeli Prime Minister; Muriel Arens, wife of Defense Minister Moshe Arens; Vera Rosenne, wife of Ambassador to the U.S. Meir Rosenne; Fleur Netanyahu, wife of Israeli Embassy Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Dr. Baruch Gur, Minister-Counselor at the Israeli Embassy.

The group continued to be led by Founding Co-chairwoman Helen Jackson, whose late husband, Senator Henry M. Jackson, an architect of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, was devoted to advancing the rights of Soviet Jews and other persecuted peoples. Current Co-chairwomen are Joanne Kemp, wife of Rep. Jack Kemp (R-NY); Dolores Beilenson, wife of Rep. Anthony C. Beilenson (D-CA); Teresa Heinz, wife of Sen. H. John Heinz (R-PA); and Shirley Metzenbaum, wife of Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH).

Travel to the Soviet Union by Members of Congress was important in bolstering the spirit of Jewish refuseniks and in bringing a forceful message to Soviet authorities. Rep. Tom Lantos (D-CA) led a group of 13 members to Leningrad and Moscow in January. Another House delegation of 19 Representatives and their spouses, led by Thomas S. Foley (D-WA), went in July; a Senate group led by Claiborne Pell (D-RI) arrived in August. Both groups visited Soviet Jews and met with high level Soviet authorities; the Senators also saw Yuri Andropov. In an address on human rights to the Supreme Soviet on behalf of the House delegation, Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA) said "As far as human rights are concerned, they are not only important to us, but are inextricably linked with other items on the agenda between our two countries."

Other Members of Congress who intervened with the Soviets on behalf of Jews and who visited with refuseniks included Senators Orrin G. Hatch (R-UT), Edward Zorinsky (D-NE), William Armstrong (R-CO), Charles E. Grassley (R-IA) and Representatives William H. Grey III (D-PA) and Jack Kemp (R-NY).

Although the past year made life increasingly difficult for Soviet Jews, hopeful signs were sought. The arrival of long-term Vilnius activist Eitan Finkelstein and his family in Israel, in December, after twelve years of refusal, indicates that the doors have not been irrevocably closed.

- prepared by Kay Halpern
  January 4, 1984

SOVIET JEWRY RESEARCH BUREAU

JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM THE USSR

STATISTICS

1965 - June 1967	4,498	1975	13,221
Oct. 1968 - 1970	4,235	1976	14,261
1971	13,022	1977	16,736
1972	31,681	1978	28,864
1973	34,733	1979	51,320
1974	20,628	1980	21,471

	1981		1982		1983		1984	
January	850	(24.9)*	290	(26.9)*	81	(23.5)*	88	(25.0)*
February	1,407	(15.8)	283	(21.9)	125	(27.2)	90	(54.4)
March	1,249	(14.3)	289	(27.3)	101	(32.7)	51	(35.2)
April	1,155	(15.5)	288	(29.5)	114	(9.6)	74	(32.4)
May	1,141	(15.8)	205	(27.8)	116	(29.3)	109	(45.9)
June	866	(14.5)	182	(27.5)	102	(38.2)		
July	779	(22.2)	186	(23.1)	167	(22.8)		
August	430	(22.3)	238	(20.2)	130	(22.3)		
September	405	(28.6)	246	(20.7)	135	(40.0)		
October	368	(24.2)	168	(34.5)	90	(46.2)		
November	363	(25.0)	137	(38.0)	56	(42.9)		
December	434	(22.8)	176	(39.8)	97	(32.0)		
	9,447	(18.6)	2,688	(27.3)	1,314	(29.5)		

From October 1968 - May 1984, 264,033 persons left the Soviet Union with Israeli visas. Approximately 163,033 of them went to Israel.

*Figures represent the percentage of those who proceeded to Israel.

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The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. We appreciate that, Dr. Korey, and we also appreciate not only your fine statement but also your adhering to our time limits.

Now, Dr. Gordon, we are delighted to hear from you.

STATEMENT OF DR. ERNEST GORDON, PRESIDENT, CHRISTIAN RESCUE EFFORT FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF DISSIDENTS, ALEXANDRIA, VA

Mr. GORDON. Thank you very much, sir. I appreciate the position you uphold very much indeed, and the subject you asked me to touch upon this afternoon was that of the Protestant groups.

Christian fellowships such as those of the Evangelical Christians, Mennonites, Baptists, and Pentecostals have been regarded in the Soviet Union as Western or non-Russian. Many of their membership in the past were farmers. Indeed, they were such capable farmers that they suffered greatly during the collectivization of the farmlands by Stalin in 1929.

According to the norm of the Soviet Union, religious freedom means only the limited freedom of highly specialized liturgical services on fixed occasions. Such a limited freedom is alien to the nature of the not so liturgical groups, whose emphasis is upon active membership in a particular Christian community, personal conversion, long worship services of 3 to 5 hours with three or four sermons, many gospel hymns, testimonies by lay folk, midweek prayer groups, Sunday school and midweek classes, daily Bible readings, daily instruction of children at home—all of which is contrary to the tenets of "scientific materialism" and therefore the cause of much persecution.

Examples of this are contained at length in my attached report. This persecution has been most severe among the members of the Council of Churches of the Evangelical Christian Baptists, whose leaders have served lengthy periods of imprisonment in rigorous labor camps.

Despite the Soviet Union's propaganda about the separation of church and state, such separation does not in fact exist. The Evangelical Baptists have consistently pleaded for the freedom of religious expression and the resistance to what they have termed Communist orthodoxy. This pleading, however, has been criticized as reactionary heresy and its advocates punished severely.

Recent articles in Pravda and similar publications have expressed indignation at the propaganda of the Baptists and others which has resulted in an increase of over 50 percent of their membership in recent times.

The Communist dominated countries of Eastern Europe seem to follow the same pattern as that initiated by the Soviet Union. Those of unofficial Christian fellowships are kept under constant surveillance and punished in a variety of ways for offenses such as those of instructing young people in the Christian faith, smuggling in Bibles, holding Bible study/prayer groups, engaging in charitable work, publishing Christian classics without the permission of the state—a permission, by the way, which is denied—and attempting to hold services in private homes, because public buildings are denied to them.

I have personally visited Eastern Europe to ascertain the extent of persecution of believers by the state and to hear the evidence of such believers who have been released from imprisonment because of their Christian witness in the past.

I have also interceded with government officials for pastors of the official Baptist Church which have had their preaching licenses revoked because of the success of their ministries among young people, and also for their congregations who have been evicted for supporting their pastors.

The concerns of the religious groups in this country, especially that of a number of Members of this Congress, have been reasonably effective in challenging the opposition of the Communist governments to persecuted and imprisoned believers. Recently enacted new and amended laws aimed at increasing the punishment of Christian leaders indicate the Soviets' intention of increasing its controls upon the religious, and particularly the Protestant, community. The need to challenge such suppression is therefore greater than ever.

The attached lists of names and incidents illustrate the nature and extent of religious persecution, particularly in the Soviet Union. Among these documents No. 1 deals with the names of Evangelical Christian Baptists in prison, as verified by Pastor Georgi P. Vins as of May 1984. Particular attention, by the way, should be paid to those who are virtually condemned to life sentences because of recently enacted laws such as those that were enacted in 1983.

Thank you very much, sir.

[Dr. Gordon's prepared statement follows:]

Testimony of Dr. Ernest Gordon
President, Christian Rescue Effort for the
Emancipation of Dissidents (CREED)
117 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee,
June 12, 1984

Christian fellowships such as those of the Evangelical Christians, Mennonites, Baptists and Pentecostals have been regarded in the Soviet Union as western or non-Russian. Many of their membership in the past were farmers; indeed they were such capable farmers that they suffered greatly during the collectivization of the farmlands by Stalin in 1929. According to the norm of the Soviet Union religious freedom means only the limited freedom of highly specialised liturgical services. Such a limited freedom is alien to the nature of the not so liturgical groups whose emphasis is upon active membership in a particular Christian community; personal conversion; long services of 3-5 hours with 3 or 4 sermons; many Gospel hymns; testimonies by lay folk; mid-week prayer groups; Sunday school and mid-week classes; daily Bible readings; daily instruction of children at home; all of which is contrary to the tenets of "scientific materialism," and therefore the cause of persecution. Examples of which are contained at length in my attached report. This persecution has been most severe among the members of the Council of Churches of the Evangelical Christians/Baptists, whose leaders have served lengthy periods of imprisonment in rigorous labor camp.

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I have also interceded with government officials for pastors of the official Baptist church who have had their preaching licenses revoked because of the success of their ministries among young people, and for their congregations who have been evicted for supporting their pastors. The concern of the religious groups in this country, especially that of a number of Members of this Congress have been reasonably effective in challenging the opposition of the Communist governments to persecuted and imprisoned believers. Recently enacted new, and amended, laws aimed at increasing the punishment of Christian leaders indicate the Soviet's intention of increasing its controls upon the religious, and particularly the Protestant, community. The need to challenge such suppression is therefore greater than ever.

The attached lists of names and incidents illustrate the nature and extent of religious persecution particularly in the Soviet Union.

I. Names of members of the Evangelical Christian Baptists in prison as verified by Pastor Georgi P. Vins, P. O. Box 1188, Elkhart, IN 46515-1188, as of May 1984. Particular attention should be paid to those who are virtually condemned to life sentences because of a recently enacted law (1983) which enables prison authorities to lengthen the sentences of Soviet prisoners who are classified as "un-reformed." Among those re-sentenced are:

Nikolai Baturine, Rudolf Klassen, Yakov Skornyakov, Aleksei Kozorezov. Others have already been threatened: Valentin Aglichev, Aleksandr Bytin, Aleksei Kalyashin, Anton Nazarevich, Vitaly Varavin, Gustav Bachman, Aleksandr Razumovsky, Ivan Pauls, Stepan Misiruk, and Viktor Peredereyev.

II. Address by Mrs. Lydia Vins on the subject of, Persecution of Evangelical Christian Baptists in the Soviet Union.

III. Typical example of harassment of two Baptist pastors in Romania, one of many similar incidents throughout communist countries.

EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN BAPTIST PRISONERS IN THE SOVIET UNION
MAY 1984

ABRAMOV,Leonid Grigorievich (b. 1931)
AGLICHEV, Valentin Iosifovich (b. 1949)
ALEMASOV, Andrei Ivanovich (b. 1921)
ANTONOV, Ivan Yakovlevich (b. 1919)
ANTONOV,Paul Ivanovich (b. 1957)
ANTROPOV, Pavel Nikolaevich (b. 1930)
ARBUZOV, Ivan Grigorievich (b. 1914)
AZAROV, Mikhail Aleksandrovich (b. 1937)
BACHMAN, Gustav Gustavovich (b. 1948)
BALATSKY, Anatoly Nikitovich (b. 1939)
BARANIUK, Ivan Andreevich (b. 1924)
BATURIN, Nikolai Georgievich (b. 1927)
BELAN, Boris Nikolaevich (b. 1954)
BELAN, Nikolai Pavlovich (b. 1917)
BELEV, Ivan Petrovich (b. 1940)
BEREZOVSKY, Vasily Tarasovich (b. 1936)
BIL, Andrei Yakovlevich (b. 1965)
BOIKO, Nikolai Yerofeyevich (b. 1922)
BONDAR, Lydia Trofimovna (b. 1935)
BUBLIK, Aleksandr Ivanovich (b. 1956)
BYTIN, Aleksandr Fedorovich (b. 1934)
CHABAN, Nikolai Semenovich (b. 1945)
CHECHUN, Daniil Afanasevich (b. 1923)
CHENDEMEROV, Anatoly Nikiforovich (b. 1939)
CHEPETS, Ivan Filatovich (b. 1929)
CHERTKOVA, Anna Vasilievna (b. 1927)
CHERVYAKOVA, Natalya Pavlovna (b. 1952)
CHIGARSKIKH, Yuri Stepanovich (b. 1935)
CHISTYAKOV,Veniamin Grigorievich (b. 1935)
CHOVGAN, Fedor Kuzmich (b. 1932)
DAMYAN, Iosif Georgievich (b. 1951)
DANILYUK, Ivan Grigorievich (b. 1938)
DIDNYAK, Maria Vasilievna (b. 1933)
DIK, Gerhard Gerhardovich (b. 1926)
DOROFEYEVA, Galina Stepanovna (b. 1937)
DURKSEN, Yakov Frantsevich (b. 1924)
ENNS, Dmitri Petrovich (b. 1953)
FILARETOV, Vasily Nikitovich (b. 1927)
FILIPISHIN, Viktor Yakovlevich (b. 1939)
FIRSOV, Vladimir Lukich (b. 1928)
FOT, Yakov Ivanovich (b. 1925)
FREEMAN, Ewald Rheingoldovich (b. 1939)
GERMANIUK, Stepan Grigorievich (b. 1934)
GOLUB, Vasily Andreyevich (b. 1930)

GOMON, Vitaly Aleksandrovich (b. 1956)
GORSHENIN, Vladimir Nikitovich (b. 1942)
GRIDNEVA, Nadezhda Andreyevna (b. 1958)
IVANOV, Arkady Pavlovich (b. 1932)
IVASCHENKO, Yakov Yefremovich (b. 1932)
KABYSH, Maiya Nikolaevna, (b. 1953)
KALYASHIN, Aleksei Aleksandrovich (b. 1955)
KARPUK, Viktor Ivanovich (b. 1952)
KERSTAN, Emelyan Fridrikhovich (b. 1934)
KHAILO, Vladimir Pavlovich (b. 1932)
KHOLODENKOV, Georgi Fedotovich (b. 1924)
KHOREV, Mikhail Ivanovich (b. 1931)
KINAS, Ivan Ervinovich (b. 1951)
KIROV, Kharlampy Vasilievich (b. 1942)
KLASSEN, Rudolph Davidovich (b. 1931)
KLAUS, Adolf Fridrekhovich (b.)
KOKURINA, Valentina Ivanovna (b. 1930)
KOLBANTSEV, Nikolai Ivanovich (b. 1946)
KOSTENIUK, Vladimir Iosifovich (b. 1929)
KOZOREZOV, Aleksei Timofeyevich (b. 1933)
KRAVCHUK, Ivan Ivanovich (b.)
KUZMENKO, Pyotr Varfolomeevich (b. 1929)
LAKKE, Vladimir Petrovich (b. 1953)
LAKOTOSH, Pavel Vasilievich (b. 1953)
LEBZAK, Aleksandr Viktorovich (b. 1963)
LEVEN, GenriKh Genrikhovich (b. 1963)
LIUST, Vladimir Viktorovich (b. 1955)
LYASHENENKO, Boris Vladimirovich (1959)
MAKHOVITSKY, Fyodor Vladimirovich (b. 1930)
MALAKHOV, Gennady Demidovich (b. 1938)
MARCHENKO, Stanislav Pavlovich (b. 1960)
MARKEVICH, Veniamin Aleksandrovich (b. 1938)
MATIUKH, Aleksandr Ivanovich (b. 1941)
MATVEICHUK, Ivan Zotovich (b. 1917)
MEGED, Vasily Karpovich (b. 1923)
MESHKO, Yuri Vasilievich (b. 1949)
MIKHIN, Vasily Akimovich (b. 1933)
MINYAEV, Nikolai Ivanovich (b. 1929)
MINYAKOV, Dmitri Vasilievich (b. 1921)
MISIRUK, Stepan Nikitovich (b. 1931)
MISSIN, N. I. (b. 1928)
MODNOV, Aleksandr Ivanovich (b. 1939)
MOISEYEV, Roman Vasilievich (b. 1954)
MOSHA, Viktor Kuzmich (b. 1935)
NAGORNY, Anatoly Konstantinovich (b. 1956)
NAZAR, Ivan Anisimovich (b. 1931)
NAZAREVICH, Anton Antonovich (b. 1945)
MIKITA, Georgi Andreyevich (b. 1947)
NIKITKOV, Aleksandr Valentinovich (b. 1934)
NIKOLAEV, Tikhon Nikolaevich (b. 1927)

OLEINIK, Pyotr Ivanovich (b. 1932)
OMELYANCHUK, Nikolai Ivanovich (b. 1957)
OSELSKY, Ivan Zakharovich (b. 1939)
PANFILOVA, Alevtina Alekseevna (b. 1936)
PANINA, Elizaveta Abramovna (b. 1949)
PASHKO, Nikolai Pavlovich (b. 1942)
PAULS, Ivan Yakovlevich (b. 1947)
PAVLIV, Aleksei Ivanovich (b. 1936)
PEREDEREYEV, Viktor Vasilievich (b. 1958)
PETERS, Daniil Danilovich (b. 1915)
PETERS, Peter Danilovich (b. 1942)
PETRENKO, (b.)
PILIPCHUK, Bronislav Andreevich (b. 1933)
PLETT, Ivan Petrovich (b. 1937)
POLISCHUK, Nikolai Petrovich (b. 1944)
POPOV, Nikolai Filippovich (b. 1927)
POPOV, Oleg Nikolaevich (b. 1954)
PROKOPCHUK, Nikolai Anisimovich (b. 1938)
PROKOPENKO, Egor Danilovich (b. 1926)
PROTSENKO, Vladimir Antonvich (b. 1928)
PROTSYSHINA, Ludmila Petrovna (b. 1956)
PRUTIANU, Khariton Antonvich (b. 1953)
PRUTIANU, Mikhail Antonvich (b. 1948)
PUSHKOV, Evgeny Nikiforovich (b. 1941)
RAZUMOVSKY, Aleksandr Evenievich (b. 1958)
REDIN, Anatoly Sergeyevich (b. 1931)
ROGALSKY, Pyotr Abramovich (b. 1937)
RUBLENKO, Anatoly Timofeyevich (b. 1949)
RUMACHIK, Pyotr Vasilievich (b. 1931)
RUNOV, Anatoly Fedorovich (b. 1938)
RUSNAK, Nikolai Petrovich (b. 1954)
RYTIKOV, Pavel Timofeevich (b. 1930)
SAVELEV, Viktor Ivanovich (b. 1963)
SAVELEVA, Valentina Ivanovna (b. 1954)
SAVENKOV, Mikhail Alekseevich (b. 1925)
SAZHNEV, Pavel Veniaminovich (b. 1952)
SHEPEL, Nikolai E. (b. 1938)
SHEVYAKOV, Ivan Ivanovich (b. 1929)
SHIDYCH, Ivan Grigorievich (b. 1936)
SHKIKAVY, Bogdan Vasilievich (b. 1932)
SCHMIDT, Boris Yakovlevich (b. 1920)
SHOKHA, Viktor Petrovich (b. 1942)
SHUBININ, Aleksei Nikitovich (b. 1921)
SHVETSOVA, Anna Vladimirovna (b. 1962)
SHVETSOVA, Dina Vladimirovna (b. 1961)
SIGAREV, Mikhail Lavrentevich (b. 1928)
SKORNYAKOV, Yakov Grigorievich (b. 1928)
SKVORTSOVA, Lubov Nikolaevna (b. 1959)
SMYNTYNA, Vladimir Antonovich (b. 1943)
SOLOVEV, Vladimir Ivanovich (b. 1949)

TEVS, Maria Petrovna (b. 1953)
TIMCHUK, Vladimir Ivanovich (b. 1959)
TRIFAN, Konstantin Semyonovich (b. 1961)
TSAPKO, Vitaly Dmitrievich (b. 1928)
TSITSYN, Boris Andreevich (b.)
TURKEVICH, Vasily Tarasovich (b. 1959)
TYAGUN, Ivan Mefodievich (b. 1930)
UBOGIKH, Aleksandr Mikhailovich (b. 1933)
VARAKSA, Nikolai Denisovich (b. 1955)
VARAVIN, Vitaly Fedorovich (b. 1959)
VILCHINSKAYA, Galina Vladimirovna (b. 1958)
VINS, Kornei Korneevich (v. 1941)
VLASENKO, Vladimir Mefodievich (b. 1954)
VOLKOV, Nikolai Ilich (b. 1933)
VOTCHEL, Mikhail Ivanovich (b. 1935)
WALL, Ivan Abramovich (b. 1923)
YANTZEN, Yakov Yakovlevich (b. 1929)
YASCHUKOVSKY,Ivan Grigorievich (b. 1929)
YATSYUK, Vasili Ivanovich (b. 1943)
YELIZAROV, Gennady Dmitrievich (b. 1949)
YEREMICHEV, Yevgeny Aleksandrovich (b. 1939)
YUDINTSEV, Andrei Vasilievich (b. 1964)
ZAKHAROV, Mikhail Pavlovich (b. 1955)
ZHELTONOZHKO, Georgi Dmitrevich (b. 1930)
ZHUKOVSKAYA, Evelina Stepanovna (b. 1940)
ZHURBA, Grigory Mikhailovich (b. 1926)
ZINCHENKO, Pavel Petrovich (b. 1957)
ZINCHENKO, Vladimir Petrovich (b. 1950)

CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

ABAKUMOVA, Maria Petrovna (b. 1923)
DZLOBA, Pavel Yakovlevich (b. 1951)
DIKMAN, Nikolai Martynovich (b. 1929)
KOZOREZOVA, Aleksandra Timofeevna (b. 1936)
LEVTSENIUK, Nikolai Dmitrievich (b. 1936)
MANUKOVSKAYA, Nadezhda Mikhailovna (b.)
NAZAREVICH, Olga Timofeevna (b. 1949)
SCHEGEL,Aleksandr Yakovlevich (b. 1938)
SHOKHA, Pyotr Maksimovich (b. 1909)
VINS, Elena Dmitrievna (b. 1942)

PERSECUTION OF EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN BAPTISTS IN THE SOVIET UNION

Religious freedom has not existed in the Soviet Union since the atheists came to power in 1917. One of the first assignments of state atheism in the Soviet Union was the eradication of religion.

The 1929 Legislation Regarding Religious Cults reflects the official attitude toward religion while Stalin was in power. The same laws remain in effect today. In addition, many secret mandates, instructions and decrees are used by athorities in their warfare against God.

Since the 1929 Legislation went into effect, tens of thousands of Christians have been arrested and tortured in Soviet prisons and labor camps. Between 1929-1940, more than 25 thousand Evangelical Christian Baptist ministers were arrested; 22 thousand of them died as prisoners. During the same years, almost all church buildings and temples were closed or destroyed.

Although the intensity of persecution has fluctuated over the years, it has never ceased. Persecution of Baptists was intensified in the early 1960's and continues to the present.

In their attempt to destroy faith in God, Soviet authorities attack believers, interrogate children, raid homes, tear down prayer tents, disrupt worship services, imprison pastors, confiscate printing equipment, and intern Christians in psychiatric hospitals.

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KGB target--Council of Evangelical Baptist Churches

The Council of Evangelical Baptist Churches (CEBC) has been a primary target of persecution for the past twenty years. The CEBC coordinates the ministry of 2000 independent Baptist churches across the Soviet Union. **Gennady Kryuchkov**, 57, CEBC president, has been hunted by the KGB since 1970 and therefore must carry out his ministry in hiding.

Other CEBC members has been given virtual life sentences: CEBC General Secretary **Nikolai Baturin**, 55, now in his twenty-first year of imprisonment, was sentenced in January 1984 to three years, his sixth term; CEBC Vice-President **Pyotr Rumachik**,53,after fourteen years of imprisonment, was sentenced in 1980 to another five year term which he is now serving in a Siberian labor camp; **Ivan Antonov**, 68, now in his eighteenth year of imprisonment, is due for release in 1992; **Mikhail Khorev**, 53,is now in his tenth year of imprisonment; **Dmitri Minyakov**, 62, after eight years of imprisonment was sentenced in 1981 to five more. **Nikolai Khrapov**, was imprisoned a total of 28 years, and died in a labor camp just months before his date of release at age 68.

Life imprisonment

Even though their terms were completed, several prisoners were not released, but were taken from labor camp to prison and re-sentenced. **Rudolf Klassen, Yakov Skornyakov, Aleksei Kozorezov, and Nikolai Baturin** are all serving extended sentences for refusing to compromise their convictions. Their sentences may be related to a new law that went into effect last year.

In 1983 a mandate was passed as an appendix to USFSR Criminal Code Statute 188-3 , giving the director of a labor camp the authority to add on as much as five years to the sentence of a prisoner who has broken a camp rule or has not "reformed" by the end of his term.

The following "offenses" constitute sufficient cause for resentencing a Christian prisoner: praying, witnessing to prisoners about God, possessing a gospel or Scripture portion, writing Bible verses and poems in a notebook or on a sheet of paper, and referring to God in personal letters to family members.

By atheistic standards, a Christian has only adequately "reformed" if he rejects God and denies his religious convictions.Several prisoners have already been threatened with prolongation of their sentences under this law: **Valentin Aglichev, Aleksandr Bytin, Aleksei Kalyashin, Anton Nazarevich, Vitaly Varavin, Gustav Bachman, Aleksandr Razumovsky, Ivan Pauls, Stepan Misiruk, Viktor Peredereyev, and Ivan Plett.**

Conditions in labor camps

Despite laws that would detain prisoners at labor camps in their own republic, most Christian prisoners are sent to the most severe camps in Siberia or the arctic region, thousands of miles from home. This makes it extremely difficult for family members to make their allotted annual visit and increases the isolation of the prisoners. Many have been deprived of their visits altogether, and others have had severe restrictions imposed on their correspondence. If the name of God is mentioned in letters, they may not be allowed to send or receive any mail. Brutal beatings, torture, hard labor, and malnutrition have gravely endangered the lives of many prisoners, including: **Nikolai Baturin, Nikolai Boiko, Mikhail Azarov, Yakov Skornyakov, Rudolf Klassen, Mikhail Khorev, Dmitri Minyakov.**

Solitary confinement, a prison within the labor camp, is used to punish prisoners. Often underground, the small cold cell has stone walls, bare cement floor, no windows, and no chair. The metal table used as a cot is locked to the wall except between 10 P.M. and 6 A.M. The prisoner is barefoot and stripped to his underwear. Food rations are meager: watery soup and a piece of bread once every other day. Confinement usually lasts 10-15 days. Afterward, the prisoner is so weak physically that he can barely stand. Nevertheless, he is forced to return to work immediately.

Solitary confinement, a measure used to deal with violations of rules within the concentration camp, is now used against God's children as punishment for praying, singing, witnessing, and reading the Gospel. Most recently held were: **Aleksei Kalyashin**, 15 days; **Khariton Prutianu**, 15 days; **Galina Vilchinskaya**, 15 days.

Psychiatric hospital--for what?

* Teaching religion to children
* Holding prayer meetings
* Organizing a youth choir
* Participating in worship services

These were the charges against Arkady Ivanov, when at his trial on June 21, 1983 he was declared dangerous to society and sentenced to treatment in a psychiatric hospital.

Arkady Ivanov, 52, father of ten, is the most recent victim of Soviet psychiatric abuse. Innocent people have been diagnosed as "sluggish schizophrenics" or accused of some other mental aberration and committed indefinitely. Forced drug treatments are among methods used to alter a prisoner's views.

Please understand the ominous dangers foreshadowed by Soviet abuse of psychiatry. Atheism considers faith in God abnormal. Simply acknowledging the existence of God is considered evidence of mental disturbance. State atheism is a God-fighting system, dedicated to the destruction of any remembrance of God.

Other Baptist prisoners in psychiatric hospitals: **Anna Chertkova**, 57, since 1973; **Vladimir Khailo**, 52, since 1980; **Anatoly Runov**,46, since 1979.

The KGB wants to silence their voices. Pray that God would intervene. God's Word exhorts us to pray without ceasing, expecially for those who are being killed, counted as sheep for the slaughter (1 Thess. 5:17; Rom. 8:36). Please help. Request the Soviet government to release Christians prisoners and stop this abuse and oppression.

Baptist Martyrs in the Soviet Army

When a young Baptist is registered for compulsory military service, the word "BAPTIST" is printed in large red letters on his documents. From this moment, the young man is recorded in a special file at the Ministry of Defense, noted as a person needing forcible reeducation. This "reeducation" is accomplished by such known methods as beatings, torture, incarceration in prison or labor camp, and in certain instances--murder. All of this is conducted by the army organs of the KGB.

Four most recent incidents of murder in the army include: **Vasili Druk**, who was killed on August 14,1981, just two months before he was due for discharge; **Vladimir Muzika** and **Phillip Kornienko**, whose bodies were delivered to their families in 1982 with an explanation that they had died tragically. **Yuri Burda** died on 31 October 1983; when his body was examined at home, the fresh marks of torture were visible.

The Council of Prisoners' Relatives

In 1964 the Council of Prisoners' Relatives (CPR) was organized by wives and mothers of imprisoned leaders from independent Evangelical Baptist churches. The CPR serves as an information network throughout the 2000 independent Baptist churches across the country, coordinates the distribution of material aid for prisoners' families, and organizes petitions and telegrams in defense of the prisoners.

In 1978 authorities attempted to place **Galina Rytikova**, 46, mother of ten, in a psychiatric hospital and put her children in an atheistic orphanage. The CPR's chairman **Aleksandra Kozorezova**, 48,mother of ten, was sentenced to three years house arrest in August 1981. **Lydia Vins**, former CPR chairman, was arrested in 1970 at age 64, and sentenced to three years imprisonment in a labor camp. **Lydia Bondar**,49, is currently serving a three year sentence for her activities in the CPR.

What to do?

Today there are approximately 200 Evangelical Christians Baptists prisoners for the cause of the gospel. About 800 familiy members are left without a breadwinner in the home.

Over the years, Christians in the Soviet Union have sent thousands of petitions to the Soviet government detailing incidents of persecution and requesting that it be curtailed. In response to such pleas, the authorities only intensified the terror against Christians.

We must do all we can to come to their aid. Recommended plan of action:

1. On the basis of the Helsinki Accords, signed by the Soviet Union,get the 1929 Legislation repealed, since this is the basis of all persecution against believers.

2. Establish an international commission to moniter Soviet torture and abuse of Christians.

3. Publicity is the best weapon in the battle against violence, so we must inform the West about the status of Christians in the Soviet Union using mass media.

4. Intervene in the cases of a few of the prisoners whose very lives are in danger today: **Pyotr Rumachik, Dmitri Minyakov, Yakov Skornyakov.** (Further details about these men are attached.)

On behalf of the persecuted Christians in my homeland, I appeal to you. Please do all you can to defend believers in the Soviet Union. Do not be indifferent to their suffering. "Deliver those who are being taken away to death, and those who are staggering to slaughter, O hold them back" (Proverbs 24:11).

Lydia Vins

Representative Abroad
for the Council of
Prisoners' Relatives

Intervene in the cases of a few of the prisoners
whose very lives are in danger today:

Pyotr Rumachik
Dmitri Minyakov
Yakov Skornyakov

RUMACHIK, Pyotr Vasilievich

Born: June 15, 1931
6 children (F67, M70, M74)

Release: August 15, 1985
(fifth term—strict regime)

Camp address:

p/ya YaG 14/5-4
g. Chita
672015
SOVIET UNION

672015 г. Чита, п/я Я Г 14/5-4, Румачик Петр Васильевич

Home address (wife):

Lubov Vasilievna Rumachik
ul. Bolnichnaya 13 kv. 51
g. Dedovsk
Moskovskaya obl. 143530
SOVIET UNION

143530 Московская обл., г. Дедовск, ул. Больничная 13 кв. 51 Румачик Любовь Васильевна

MINYAKOV, Dmitri Vasilievich

Born: February 18, 1921
Widower, 5 children (M66)
Stomach and heart pains.

Release: January 21, 1986
(third term—strict regime + conf.)

Camp address:

uchr. UR 65/6-19
g. Kuibyshev
443026
SOVIET UNION

443026 г. Куйбышев-26, учр. У Р 65/6-19, Миняков Дмитрий Васильевич

Home address (son):

Vladimir Dmitrievich Minyakov
ul. Sugise 3
g. Valga
Estonia 202500
SOVIET UNION

202500 Эст. ССР, г. Валга ул. Сугизе 3, Миняков Владимир Дмитриевич

SKORNYAKOV, Yakov Grigorievich

Born: August 8, 1928
9 children (M65, M68)

Release: June 31, 1986
(third term—strict regime)

Camp address:

GM 172/5
g. Novy Uzen
Mangyshlakskaya obl. 466207
SOVIET UNION

466207 Мангышлакская обл., г. Новый-Узень учр. Г М 172/5 Скорняков Яков Григорьевич

Home address (wife):

Nina Stepanovna Skornyakova
3-i Trudovoi per. 19
g. Dzhambul
Kazakhskaya SSR 484002
SOVIET UNION

484002 Каз.ССР, г. Джамбул, пер. 3-Трудовой 19, Скорнякова Нина Степановна

ROMANIAN GOVERNMENT BEGINS INVESTIGATION
OF
BAPTIST PASTORS

On May 25, the Romanian Government began a panel investigation against Pastors Ion Steff and Beni Cocar of Medias for allegedly preaching without necessary permits. The case documents against the pastors consist of official letters from the Baptist Union as well as letters from former church members. The letters accuse Steff and Cocar of doctrine contrary to the Baptist denomination and the confirmation of their loss of official permission to preach due to this breach of doctrine. A sentence of six months to two years in prison is possible if convicted.

In his defense, Beni Cocar presented to the militia the original contract wherein he and Pastor Steff were hired, as well as a letter signed by 528 members of the Baptist congregation in their support. In March 1984, Dr. Ernest Gordon, President of CREED in Washington, D. C. and a former Princeton University Dean, visited the Baptist Church in Medias and was convinced through his discussions with Pastors Steff and Cocar that their beliefs were in keeping with traditional Baptist doctrine.

The real motive for the state action is an attempt by the government to repress religious growth through the offices of the Baptist Union and the Department of Cults. Through the preaching of Pastors Steff and Cocar, the church in Medias increased its membership from two hundred members to over five hundred members within a short period of time and included large numbers of young people. The extent of this growth runs contrary to the atheistic policies of the Communist party, which in turn started to apply pressure on the pastors to curtail their activities. The Romanian government is eager to portray a benevolent appearance to the West with regard to religious freedom, but actions such as these expose another reality.

East Watch International feels that the process against Pastors Steff and Cocar is a serious turn of events and warrants the attention of all those who seek to monitor Romania's compliance with International Human Rights Agreements.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Dr. Gordon.

I wonder if either one of you could comment on what conditions you think must exist before the Soviets will make concessions on human rights issues?

Mr. KOREY. Regrettably, Mr. Chairman, this is an unfortunate facet of Soviet foreign policy, that they today hold the Jews as hostages to détente, the state of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. They do not act in accordance with solemn agreements which they have signed or which they uphold, whether they are covenants on human rights or whether they are the Helskinki Final Act and the Madrid agreement.

History has suggested that the Soviets have waited until there is an improvement in the relationship between the West and the East, and particularly between the Soviet Union and the United States, and therefore some of the remarks which you articulated earlier about the need for a dialog and the need to reconstruct a relationship is essential, and some of your own suggestions pointing in that direction I would think ought to be supported by all men of good will.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Dr. Gordon.

Mr. GORDON. It would seem, sir, that after the past 4 years the oppression of leaders of Jews and Christians has increased, particularly those with leadership potential. I think these recent laws that have been enacted—and there were a number of laws that have been enacted in the last year, right up through January—all of those indicate the toughening of sentences, the increasing of sentences, sentences and laws which would control those who have completed their sentences and being released, so that they would be kept under constant surveillance.

Again, this indicates the great fear of any kind of religious leadership, those of the quality of Lech Walesa and Alek Ginsburg and Georgi Vins and Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov and so many others. I think the only hope we have, again, lies in our economic and technical strength.

The CHAIRMAN. I mentioned the seven Pentecostals living in the basement of our Moscow Embassy. What lessons do you suppose we can learn from the successful emigration of this family, who left the Soviet Union in mid-1983 and emigrated to the West?

How much effect do you suppose that adverse world public opinion of the Soviet handling of their case affected Soviet policy?

Mr. GORDON. I think that the great amount—and there was a very considerable amount—of publicity that was affored to the Siberian Seven had a great deal to do with the release of the Siberian Seven. Indeed, those who were close to them, particularly at the political level, felt it was only a matter of time. However, I would remind you that it was quite a considerable period of time, certainly in an American time sense; namely, that it was a period of 4 years.

But I think that one of the great things that the case of the Siberian Seven has done has been to bring the attention of the citizens of this country to the reality of the situation in the Soviet Union and in its allied colonies.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Korey, what factors do you visualize as existing in a person's background which, if they are there, would virtually guarantee the Soviets' refusal of an emigration request? And in your judgment, do the Soviets exploit these factors?

Mr. KOREY. If I interpret your question correctly, I think that there is a certain element of suspicion on your part and on the part of the civilized community about the nature of the rationality behind the Soviet refusal to permit exist visas or grant exit visas to particular individuals. The practice now has been extended to virtually almost all people who apply to leave.

There is a very grave reluctance on the part of Jewish people to even apply, because they are fearful that they will be turned down. We know of some 10,000 individuals who have been refused. Some have been refused over and over again. Sometimes if in the past some were refused and others were granted, the basis of the distinction was not clear. The two people may have worked on the same kinds of jobs in the same kinds of institution, and irrationality and arbitrariness prevailed. That is, one would be permitted to leave and another would not be permitted to leave.

Most often, the reason given by Soviet authorities when they have dealt with the refuseniks, most often the reason given is that they are familiar with Soviet secrets. But the fact of the matter is, Mr. Chairman, that some of these people have been refuseniks for 5, 8, 10 years, and therefore they have had no access to any kind of documentary information, any kind of scientific data, for a long period of time, which would have made their information useless.

What we are dealing with here in essence, Mr. Chairman, is an arbitrariness and an irrationality that one finds in the outside world difficult to explain and clarify.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Dr. Gordon, it is well established that the Soviets do not permit emigration for other than family reunification purposes. Even a valid family reunification case under the Soviet procedures may simply languish for years, and we are all familiar with cases that have been hanging on and dragging on for many years.

We all know that the Soviets do not want to let these people go. But I think it would be useful to get your views on the underlying rationale for Soviet policy. Would it not be much easier to let these people go and avoid the constant international criticism?

Mr. GORDON. That is a big question, because it makes one delve into the metaphysical depths. First of all, I would think that there seems to be a desire to punish people who want to leave "the perfect society." As you know, in continuous articles in Pravda and other scientific magazines there is always emphasis placed upon the Soviet Union as being the ideal state, the completed Utopia, and indeed actually they speak about it as having reached its ultimate level of perfection.

That is why many of those who seek permission to emigrate are put into psychiatric hospitals. Again, I think it is the fact of the person who is caught between the lie and the truth, and as a consequence they are overcome by the negativism of the lie.

I think that degree of punishment is very important. There is also the great fear that those who do emigrate will express their feelings about the experiences that they had in this ideal situation.

For example, late last year around about December, I met three Russians who had recently defected from the Soviet Union, and I asked them why. And the three of them gave the same answer, namely that they could not stand the amount of lies, lying that they had to endure within the Soviet state.

And so I think that this is the big lie which captures us all, and which is again evidenced by the fact that the Soviet Union spends $2 billion more in propaganda per year than we do. We spend what, about $600 to $700 million through the USIA every year, and they spend $2 billion more than that, which I think is a significant factor. And they do not want their propaganda, a propaganda of lies, to be denied.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I would like to probe a little, Dr. Korey, your response to the request that many of us have made to the administration to seek the reopening of the U.S. consulate in Kiev. I did write to the Secretary of State, urged it, and he wrote back and said: "I strongly agree that an American consulate would provide many advantages. This is certainly a topic in our dialogue with the Soviet Union."

Do you agree that a U.S. consulate in Kiev would have benefits for the United States, for Jews and for other citizens?

Mr. KOREY. I personally would. My organization has not taken a position on that, but I would see value in having a U.S. consulate in Kiev because it would open up avenues of communication with the population as a whole.

The CHAIRMAN. Historically, American Jews have excelled in the sciences, arts, legal and medical professions. It is increasingly difficult for Jews to enroll in institutes of higher education, however, and Soviet Jews are being stripped of their degrees.

If this trend continues, what will be the long-term consequences for the Jewish population?

Mr. KOREY. Mr. Chairman, the consequences have already been noted in the statement of the activists to the Congress of the Soviet Communist Party; namely, a very rapid diminution in the number of Jews entering into the scientific professions.

In the sixties, Mr. Chairman, something like 2,500 Jews per annum entered into the scientific community. During the seventies it was cut in half as a result of the drop in the enrollment of Jews in higher education. We can expect a very sharp diminution in the course of the next decade as to the number of Jews in the scientific world generally, and this I would think would affect deleteriously science generally.

Besides, as you know, Mr. Chairman, in certain areas in the Soviet Union that are security areas, the diplomatic corps or the higher levels of military life, a situation of Judencein prevails: Jews cannot enter into the higher diplomatic academies to study, nor can they do that in the armed forces.

So that Jews are faced by a dismal future in terms of job opportunities over the long run, and that makes ever more essential exodus from the Soviet Union, to where they can live freely as Jews.

You asked earlier, Mr. Chairman, about emigration. The Soviet Union has permitted in the past emigration, and you took note of this in a very effective manner, I thought, in terms of reunion of family or reunion of kin. They had permitted, for example, Germans to leave the Soviet Union and be reunited with their families in Germany, or Greeks with those in Greece, or Spaniards who had become Soviet citizens.

Jews in the Soviet Union who want to be reunited with their kin in Israel, for example, find it ever more urgent to do so because now there is a major campaign on to prevent the Jews in the Soviet Union from studying Hebrew or Jewish history. A determined effort is being made to obliterate that form of ethnic consciousness.

The CHAIRMAN. I think that we might submit the rest of the questions for response for the record. Perhaps we could just take one last question. Let me get a brief comment from each of you on how important you think it is to keep the pressure on the Soviets for reform by continuing the Helsinki process.

In your opinion, was the Madrid meeting a positive development for Soviet Jewry? If so, in what way?

Mr. KOREY. Yes; I do think so, Mr. Chairman. I have written a major study on this for the Foreign Policy Association called Human Rights and the Helsinki Accord. I think Madrid, earlier Belgrade, and hopefully at the next meetings on human rights in Ottawa, Canada, in 1985, and in Berne, Switzerland, in 1986, and in Vienna—the next review session of Helsinki—a forum will be provided for the airing of violations of human rights.

No government is immune from the impact of world public opinion, and so therefore these meetings and these review sessions and Helsinki itself have acted as a positive force for dealing with the human rights issue.

Mr. GORDON. I would agree with that. It seems to me that one of the great advantages of the Madrid conference was the fact that human rights was brought into the open, particularly in the latter stages, these references to religious persecution.

I think we should recognize, too, as I referred to earlier, that our technological and economic power is such that Eastern Europe in particular depends upon the granting of the MFN status every year. The Jackson-Vanik amendment to the Trade Act was brought in, I think, in 1974, which was the year before the Helsinki accords, and I think some thought might be given to strengthening such acts in order to strengthen the position regarding the obedience to the requirements of the Helsinki Final Basket.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you both very much. We appreciate your appearance here today, and we will submit additional questions to you, which we hope you would not mind answering for the record. The record will be held open for that purpose.

We will ask our entire second panel to come up to the witness table, and then I will comment on why I will ask a few of them to go ahead of the others:

The Right Reverend John Butosi, bishop of the Calvin Synod Conference of the United Church of Christ, on Hungarian issues, Bridgeport, CT; Mr. John Hvasta, executive director, Slovak-American National Council, Oakton, VA; Mr. Yuli Tartakovsky, former refusenik in Kiev, Ukraine, now a credit analyst with the Federal Reserve Bank, New York, NY; Father Casimir Pugevicius, executive director, Lithuanian-Catholic Religious Aid in Brooklyn, NY, Annandale, VA.; and Mr. Jan Nowak, director of the Polish-American Congress.

[Pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. I think, Father Pugevicius, you are accompanied by a companion and colleague. I wonder if you will introduce her to the panel.

Father PUGEVICIUS. Yes. With me is Marian Skabeikis, associate director of Lithuanian-Catholic Religious Aid, who actually prepared most of the written testimony.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Pell and Senator Dodd have asked to be here so that they can hear the first two witnesses on the panel, too. So we will start with the other three witnesses on the panel now and hope that the other Senators will be on their way, because we are not able to hold up the proceedings of this hearing for very long.

Would you please go ahead first, Reverend Butosi.

STATEMENT OF THE RIGHT REVEREND JOHN BUTOSI, BISHOP OF THE CALVIN SYNOD CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, BRIDGEPORT, CT

Reverend BUTOSI. Mr. Chairman, it is a great honor for me to appear before this committee, and I would like to congratulate you on having these hearings.

I believe that religion plays a much more significant role in the affairs of humankind than is generally assumed, and I also believe that the United States can advance the cause of religious freedom in Eastern Europe more efficiently than any other country in the world.

I was asked to focus on the religious rights situation for Hungarian believers in Hungary and the Hungarian minority in Romania. Let me start with the latter one, Romania.

I am sure you know that the 2½ million Hungarians, the largest national minority in Europe, do not live in the Transylvanian part of Romania as aliens in a strange environment, but as an oppressed nation in the land of their ancestors. Transylvania has been an integral part of the Kingdom of Hungary for more than a millenium.

I am sure that you also know that in Romania nationality denotes religion and vice versa. The Romanians are almost all Orthodox, the Hungarians Roman Catholic or Protestant, the Germans and the Saxons mostly Lutherans. Thus, treatment of a particular religious denomination is clearly tied with that of a nationality and vice versa. The Hungarian believers therefore bear a fourfold cross in Romania: The burden of being Hungarians in a Romanian state, non-Communist in a Communist state, Protestant or Roman Catholics in an Orthodox environment, and Evangelical Christians in a state-controlled church.

You must also be aware of the fact that Romania has signed international agreements and accepted constitutional laws to ensure minority rights and freedom of religion, but in reality is violating all laws and agreements. While declaring the separation of church and state, the Department of Cults is in full control of all religious matters, from licensing clergy to issuing building permits, and it is up to the department what happens in Romania. Oftentimes I call this department the archbishop and the patriarch and the pope of religious life in Romania. It is a policy of total interference in ecclesiastial matters according to the interest and expediency of the Communist state.

In my prepared statement I describe the recent case to illustrate this point in the case of the Reverend Laszlo Tokes. Despite all of the contrary impressions, the purpose of this department, the Department of Cults, is to discourage, restrict, and eliminate religious activities in general and to uproot, abolish, and annihilate the religion of the minorities in particular, so that they would be Romanianized with utmost despatch.

This is the reason for attacking the church as the strongest bulwark of ethnic life. The goal of this intent has been advanced in many ways, but I would like to call your attention only to three phases.

First, they tried to uproot the church from its historical soil, sever the relationship from its own history, and make the cultivation of historical continuity impossible. Especially important, that in 1977 archival material were nationalized, collected, and mostly destroyed. They are unavailable for research.

The second one is to deprive the religious community from their spiritual resources, most notably from the Bible. For the Judaeo-Christian community the Bible is crucial, and the Communists know this, oftentimes more than the Judaeo-Christian communities. So possession of a Hungarian Bible is hindered by all means. It even burned, as it happened recently in the so-called Csango region.

But the most recent and perhaps the most sinister attempt of achieving this goal is to prevent the religious community from having adequate leadership. The alienation process is going on all over, but primarily focusing on seminary and congregational life.

Admission to the seminary is increasingly difficult. The quota is limited, as I indicated in my statement. When in seminary, the students are under the control of the secret police and taught by ill-equipped professors. If the students completed their theological training, they are placed in congregations not according to the need and wishes of the congregation, but according to further control and ineffectiveness.

Woe to the pastor who refuses to be under control or who becomes, by the grace of God, effective in his ministry. Then the price is demotion, intimidation, imprisonment, and death. This I illustrated in my paper the case of Rev. Ferenc Visky and Geza Palffy. This latter one was beaten to death because he made a statement, "Strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered." This is the prophecy that is fulfilled, and this is how the Romanian State tries to destroy the only remaining institution which could meet the social, cultural, spiritual, and religious needs of a minority nation.

I also made some observations on the Hungarian believers' situation and noted that, while we have positive notes, there are headaches as well. The "basic community" movement in the Roman Catholic Church, the overdisciplinary tendency in the Reformed Church, the criticism of the theology of diakonia among the Lutherans, are examples of this; but primarily the spiritual vacuum of the nation, despite the economic advancement.

So in this light, Mr. Chairman, I humbly suggest to this committee to make good resolutions, especially in regard to the community corporate rights of a minority nation, but more importantly, follow up good resolutions with forceful actions; second, to establish comprehensive contacts—and the chairman already made note of this desire of mine—and finally, challenge the region with a vision which is universal, in harmony with the spiritual insight of all humankind as well as our American heritage.

Thank you very much

[Reverend Butosis' prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE RIGHT REVEREND DR. JOHN BUTOSI

Mr. Chairman, my name is John Butosi, pastor of the United Church of Christ, Bridgeport, Connecticut, and bishop of the Calvin Synod Conference of the United Church of Christ, a denomination comprised of 1.7 million people in the United States. I am also representing the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, an ecumenical body with 153 member denominations all around the world as member of its Caribbean and North American Area Council.

Let me commend you, Mr. Chairman, for having this hearing. I consider this opportunity as a great honor and privilege for one who is convinced that true religious faith plays a much more significant role in the affairs of mankind than it is generally assumed. Moreover, I believe that the Government of the United States of America can advance the true cause of peace with righteousness in Eastern Europe more effectively than many religious leaders of the world. So I feel quite at home here, and proceed with trust and hope to meet my assignment. After a brief general background, I wish to share with you my perception on the religious situation in Romania, particularly the Hungarian minority nation in Transylvania, and touching on the religious rights situation for Hungarian believers in Hungary. I intend to offer some suggestions for the effective work of this Committee.

My presentation is based on personal knowledge, living in Eastern Europe for 27 years and keeping contact with my friends ever since by visits, correspondence, and joint projects. I know personally not only the present church officials, but also representatives of church members, clergy, and various segments of society. In addition, I try to be informed on both the theological issues and the pragmatic problems of the religious situation in Eastern Europe. I do not consider myself an "expert" on all issues, but what I am going to present is factual, can be documented, and springs from a desire to love God and my fellow human beings.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

Transylvania—this D-shaped, distinct geographical region of 21,297 square miles, bordered on the north and east by the Carpathians, on the south by their continuation, the Transylvanian Alps, and on the west by the Bihar Mountains, populated by about 7 million people—has been an integral part of the Kingdom of Hungary for more than a millenium. At times, during history, Transylvania was an autonomous principality, nevertheless its Princes emphasized the role of the province as being a part of the legal continuity of the Hungarian State. By the Treaty of Trianon (1920), which was never ratified by the United States of America, Transylvania was awarded to Romania, a State which came into being with little regard for the wishes of the peoples inhabiting the area. This unjust treaty was re-imposed on the area after World War II which, coupled with communism and Romanian nationalism, created an even harder burden on all national minorities including 2.5 million Hungarians (the largest national minority in Europe), 400,000 Saxons, 100,000 Jews, as well as others. Hungarians in Transylvania consider themselves not a minority in an alien environment, but as an oppressed nation on the land of their ancestors.

It is important to know that in Romania, nationality denotes religion and vice versa. The Romanians are almost all Romanian Orthodox. Hungarians in transylvania are either Reformed or Roman Catholic, although Unitarians are also present in their ranks. Saxons (Germans) are mostly Lutherans, but in the Banat the Schwabians are Roman Catholic. (The Baptists and Pentecostalists made spectacular growth in recent years in all nationalities.) Thus, treatment of and policies toward a particular religious denomination are closely tied to the treatment of and policies toward a nationality, and vice versa. The Hungarian believers in Romania bear a fourfold cross: they are non-Communists in a Communist society, non-Romanians in a Romanian State, non-orthodox in an Orthodox environment (Romanian Orthodox Church, estimated 16 million, is one of the three largest Orthodox communions in the world), and Evangelical Christian in a State-controlled Church.

Another important fact in Eastern Europe is the cleavage between the theory and the practice of law. E.g. Article 22 of the 1965 Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Romania states: "In the Socialist Republic of Romania the co-inhabiting nationalities are assured the free utilization of their native language as well as books, papers, magazines, theaters and education at all levels in their own language." But the reality is that every word of this law was violated manifold by the Romanian State as it has been proved by other witnesses before the Senate Committee on Finance from year to year. . .

RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN ROMANIA

According to Article 30 of the Romanian Constitution "freedom of conscience shall be guaranteed to all citizens of the Socialist Republic of Romania" and "anybody shall be free to share or not to share a religious faith." In reality, however, all religions are under the tight and cruel control of the Communist government as exercised mainly through the Department of Cults which is the liaison between the government and the 14 recognized religious denominations. Prior to World War II, there were 60 religious groups in Romania, but under the Communist rule 46 were either forced to merge as in the case of the Uniate Church into the Orthodox Church, or were outlawed by the State. Participation in any unofficial religious denomination is punishable by law.

While the Romanian Constitution "guarantees" religious freedom for the 14 "cults", even these officially recognized denominations are in servile dependence to the State. The Department of Cults has authority to set quotas for theological training, to license clergy, to approve religious leaders, to control contact with co-religionists abroad, to issue permits for constructing or organizing new churches or expanding the existing ones. (Few permits are issued, and often there is a "price" for it.) It is no secret that the Communist Party's philosophy is atheism, and therefore the Department of Cults seeks to discourage religious activity and when this is impossible, to restrict it. Churches and religious leaders receive financial support from the State, but the purpose is clearly to make them even more subservient to the State.

A recent illustration of this polity of total interference in ecclesiastical matters is the case of the Rev. Laszlo Tokes. This 32 year old Reformed minister whose father, Dr. Istvan Tokes was illegally forced to retire as theological professor and general secretary of the Cluj-Kolozsvar bisopric as of November 1, 1983, serves in Des, Transylvania. As a dynamic youth leader in church and society, he conducted a survey among the ministers in his presbytery on the situation of the distribution of hymn books and wall calendars. He sent the complete report of the results to the respective church authorities with the intent of accurately informing them on the actual situation. As an "acknowledgement" of his work, the Bishop initiated disciplinary action against him. (Evidently because he had to discipline this young minister who dared to associate himself with an underground publication, Ellenpontok (Counterpoint) which, in October of 1982, published a memorandium proposing a course of action for the participants of the Madrid Conference reviewing compliance with the Helsinki Final Act.) The charges were dismissed by the respective board of the presbytery, nevertheless the Bishop continues to enforce disciplinary actions by removing the Rev. Laszlo Tokes from Des to some remote village where he can literally "disappear." On April 16, 1984, I wrote a letter to the Bishop inquiring about the case. I have not received a reply, perhaps because I should have inquired at the Department of Cults . . .

The over-reaction of the Bishop to the Rev. L. Tokes' innocent survey can be understood from another aspect, too. He touched a very sensitive area of church life in Transylvania: it is impossible to buy a Reformed hymn book in Cluj as it is out of print for years! Freedom of publication of theological books, periodicals, and other religious material is extremely restricted, and only selected persons can receive religious books or magazines from abroad. The Romanian State is particularly fearful of Hungarian Bibles! Last time when I crossed the Romanian border, I had to answer three questions: "Do you have gun? Do you have drug? Do you have Bible?" Of course, I had Bible, and fortunately they let me have it while I traveled in Romania, but not all my bishop colleagues have been as fortunate! . . . Importing Bibles is now prohibited by the government, but the government also restricts the number of Bibles which can be printed at home in an inadequate manner. Lutheran Bishop, Albert Kline noted to recent visitors that "if the German community requested 10,000 Bibles, it might get approval for 4,000 or 5,000 Bibles." When the World Alliance of Reformed Churches sent in 20,000 Bibles, only 10,000 were distributed: 1 for every 100 believers . . . But the most shocking news about this deprivation of Hungarian minority from the Bible reached us last month. In the Moldovian-Bukovinan region, there are 125,000 "Székely-Csángó" population who, for centuries, retained their Hungarian language, customs, songs, prayers, using their Bibles as the source of their religious and ethnic identity. The Romanian Government prevented all travel to that region in recent years, and now we learned that, in its nationalist-chauvinist attempt of Romanianization all Hungarian Bibles were confiscated and burned . . .

The United Nations Ad Hoc Committee on Genocide in 1948 accepted the following definition as one of the ways by which the crime of cultural genocide may be committed: "Systematic destruction of historical or religious monuments or their diversion to alien uses, destruction or dispersion of documents and objects of historical, artistic, or religious value and of objects used in religious worship." The Romanian Government has been practicing this crime for years against the Hungarian minority nation. Decree Law 206/1947 and Act No. 63 of November 2, 1974 nationalized all "documents, official and private correspondence, memoirs, manuscripts, maps, films, slides, photographs, sound-engravings, diaries, manifestos, posters, sketches, drawings, engravings, imprints, seals and like material" over 30 years old, from the possession of religious and cultural institutions and private citizens. The first victim of these war-like designs was the Hungarian Reformed Church in the north-east districts, and the intent was to sever the religious communities from their historical roots. The church without a past (tradition) has no future, especially one which represents a religious and national minority. The Ceausescu Regime makes every effort to expropriate even the tombs of the most prominent church leaders of the past in the historically famous cemetery of Hazsongard in Cluj-Kolozsvar in order to falsify history and deprive the Hungarian Reformed Church from its past.

But the most devastating method and the most sinister attempt of the Department of Cults is to deprive the churches from adequate and proper leadership. Knowingly or unknowingly, the Romanian State fulfills the prophecy, "Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered" (Zacheriah 12:7, Matthew 26:31). This "beating" takes various forms of which I mention only a few:

By open atheistic propaganda young people are discouraged to receive religious education and enter the ministry. Religious instruction is conducted in the parish houses, 20–30 percent of the children attending; the instructor, however, cannot use blackboard, textbook, or even the Bible, neither are the children allowed to make notes. It is forbidden to put questions to the children or to take them for a trip. Religous affiliation can be a hindrance to have higher education. . . . However, these measures turn out to be as ineffective as the Pharaoh's command to kill the Hebrew male children in the process of birth (Exodus 1:15–22). Nowhere in Eastern Europe is the religious ferment as noticeable as in present day Romania.

Limiting the number of seminarians who can be trained to be good "shepherds"—is the next step. The Lutheran Saxon Church would need 8–10 new theological students each year; thus in 1989, 10 new students were approved; in 1981, there were 5; in 1982, just 2 were approved for entry into the seminary. Worse is the situation in the Hungarian Lutheran Church: their quota is ONE student in every OTHER year. However, the plight of the Hungarian Reformed Church is the worst: it would need 23–24 new students each year as it was the case during the period of 1949–75. In 1979, the number was lowered to 13, in 1980 to 10, and in 1983 only 6 were approved out of 68 applicants. (Even the Hungarian Baptist Church, 13,000 in number, have 8 students!)

While in seminary, the students are organized into a spy ring. At the Cluj Protestant Theological Institute, the representative of the "securitate" (Romanian Secret Police) lives in the seminary building to supervise and direct the training of the servants of the State; he searches the rooms and personal belongings of the students while the students are in class. This wicked system of controlling the theological students produced fear, intimidation, distrust.

The system also takes care of the professors. The beloved Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church, Aaron Marton who was imprisoned for many years, expressed his deep concern that the Romanian Government did not allow capable priests to go to Rome for proper professional training, and 60 percent of the trained professors and priests were above 50 years of age. The restriction on receiving gifts, books, educational material from the West, corresponding with relatives, friends or institutions in non-Communist countries harm especially the minority population and the theological education in particular.

If the students completed their theological training, they are carefully placed to congregations: not according to the need and wishes of the congregations, but according to the demand of further control and ineffectiveness. If a pastor proves to be a good shepherd, beatings can be expected either from the civil or from the church authorities, or from both. The case of the Reverend Ferenc Visky of Hegyközpályi, Transylvania is just one of the illustrations. Because he remained faithful to his call, he had to bear a fourfold cross: Hungarian in a chauvinistic Romania, Reformed in an Orthodox flood, non-Communist in a Communist society, and Evangelical Christian in a government-controlled Reformed Church. As a result he was sentenced to an 18–22 year imprisonment in the early 1960's and his wife with seven children was deported to a camp at the Danube delta. After 6½ years, he received amnesty and the family was reunited in Hegyközpályi under strict ecclesiastical and secret police surveilance. Of course, he continued his faithful ministry, and thus on June 24, 1983, four secret policemen searched his house for foreign currency, jewelry, and books published outside of Romania. Currency and jewelry were not found, but books were discovered, and that is illegal. On July 1, 1983 he had to move out of the parsonage and the Church forced him to premature retirement BEFORE the case was put to trial. The irony of the case is that, through the intervention of United States diplomatic sources, the Reverend Visky was acquitted of all charges by the Romanian State, and the Church had to reinstate him . . . The Rev. Geza Palffy of Székelyudvarhely was not so fortunate. This faithful and loyal Roman Catholic priest made a statement at the Christmas mass of 1983 that in Hungary Christmas is a holiday, while in Romania it is a workday. For this "crime" he was arrested and so brutally beaten up by the police that on March 1, 1984 he died in the Marosvásárhely hospital at the age of 43. When he was buried, 206 priests accompanied his coffin . . .

Because of the increasing pressure, harassment, intimidation, demotion, disciplinary actions, and fatal beatings—more and more capable pastors are forced to leave their posts, or even the country. In the last 4-5 years at least 10–12 Hungarian Reformed pastors "emigrated" from Romania to the West, including the son of the Hungarian Reformed Bishops. And the sheep is being scattered in Romania!

As a result of this systematic and intentional deprivation of leadership in the minority churches, the Romanian Government tries to destroy the only remaining institution which could fulfill the socio-cultural needs of minorities and nurture their ethnic heritage. This genocide, this chauvinistic Romanianization is "The Truth about the National Question in Romania." Let there be no mistake about it!

RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN HUNGARY

In regard to Hungary, the "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1983"—submitted to you by the Department of State—strikes positive notes: despite of purposeful undermining of the future of religion by the Communist State, 8.5 million out of a population of 10.7 million manifest some religious belief; church and state relations seems to be improving (Jesuit-staffed center for meditation, more liberal provisions for religious instruction to children, good access to religious materials, including Bibles and prayer books, etc.).

This is true. But all major religious groups have headaches.

In the Roman Catholic Church (5.25 million), the "basic community" movement is not so much a dissident organization, accusing the hierarchy of dogmatism and collaborationism, but rather claiming the "fresh air" of the Second Vatican Council which evidently has found closed doors in Hungary.

In the Reformed (Calvinist) Church (2 million), the tendency of overdisciplining "disobedient" servants still causes problems as illustrated in the case of Dr. Joseph Pungur. When this missionary worker of the Reformed Church in Hungary could not return to Hungary in 1982, the Reformed Church in Hungary forbide Dr. Pungur to wear the minister's robe anywhere, doing pastoral work, and revoked the Doctor of Philosophy degree which was awarded to him several years before, after satisfying all the requirements for such a degree . . .

In the Lutheran Church (0.5 million), the upcoming VII. Assembly of World Lutheranism to be held in Budapest, provided an occasion to "analyse and slander" the theology of diakonia, the "official" theology of Protestantism in Hungary. The questions are raised: is it a theology or has it become an ideology? is it something that God requires or is it something that the State requires and the Church gladly renders, for it pays?

However, the greatest religious problem in Hungary seems to be the spiritual vacuum of the nation. The high percentage of suicide, alcoholism, divorce and abortion is but symptoms of a national malaise which cannot be obliterated by daring economic reforms.

SOME PRAGMATIC SUGGESTIONS

In the last 7-10 years religious bodies expressed deep concerns about the religious situation in Eastern Europe, particularly in Romania, and suggested steps to be taken by denominations, religious world organizations, and U.S. Government. E.g. the World Alliance of Reformed Churches prepared a theological treatise on "*A Christian Declaration on Human Rights*" 1977 and passed resolutions in 1983 and 1984 recommending the United States Government to withdraw Most Favored Nation privileges from Romania unless basic human rights are guaranteed to the Hungarian Minority Nation in Romania. Unfortunately the implementation of these resolutions are often wrecked by church officials who consider "peace" more important than "justice." Better results were achieved by U.S. Government officials and Senators. This is how the Rev. Ferenc Visky was reinstated. This is how we were able to send aid to rebuild church edifices in Romania after the devastating earthquake of March 4, 1977. We shall never forget the valient efforts of Senator Ribicoff in this respect!

This is why I dare to suggest a few agenda items to this Committee

1. Implement resolutions! Resolutions are very important as they can clarify issues, set courses of events, put actions into motions. E.g. a statement on the collective, community rights of a minority is long overdue in national and international documents: we should protect and promote the values which are claimed by a national minority in traditions, culture, "collective individuality." But the spirit of every good resolution becomes a ghost, if it is not embodied in realistic actions. If a resolution has no follow up, it is painfully deceptive for all concerned. Emphatic understanding and forceful actions are needed if we want to win the confidence of Eastern Europe.

2. Establish comprehensive contacts! Visits are extremely important, and the professional staff members of this Committee have beautifully demonstrated their sensitivity in their 1983 report on "Human Rights Issues in United States Relations with Romania and Czechoslovakia." In such visits we ought to have opportunities to meet people with and without government participation, if we do not want to fall victims of Potemkin Walls. But how to do this in Romania where every citizen is obligated to report every conversation with a "foreigner"? On how we solve this problem depends the effectiveness of our work!

3. Challenge with vision! If it is true that the only universal fact about human rights is their universal violation, it is equally true that only a universal vision can cure our madness. I firmly believe that this vision must go beyond all party politics and should be in harmony with the best spiritual insight of all humankind, and since I also believe that the United States of America can become a unique servant of the Almighty God in the service of this vision, I pray that this Committee may always strive to do justice, to love kindness, and walk humbly with our God (Micah 6:8).

Thank you.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Thank you very kindly.

[Pause.]

The **CHAIRMAN**. We will hear next, hoping that Senator Dodd will arrive in the meantime, Mr. Tartakovsky.

STATEMENT OF YULI TARTAKOVSKY, FORMER REFUSENIK FROM KIEV, UKRAINE, ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOVIET JEWRY, NEW YORK, NY

Mr. **TARTAKOVSKY**. Mr. Chairman, Senator Pell.

My name is Yuli Tartakovsky. I am 37 years old and I am now an American citizen. I was born in the Soviet Union near Kiev and lived there until I was 28. I am presently working as a credit analyst in a New York City bank.

I came here to testify on behalf of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry in order to share with you some of my personal experiences as a Jew in Russia. There are some fact sheets on the Jewish religion and culture in the Soviet Union attached to my statement.

A Jew in the Soviet Union has "Jew" identified on his passport, and is singled out as being different. He is considered a second-class citizen from birth and is labeled "Jew," whether or not he is religious.

All Jews are oppressed in the Soviet Union to a greater or lesser degree. I remember how difficult it was for me as a Jew to be accepted into the Soviet university. Some schools do not accept any Jews at all. Others have different admission requirements for Jews and non-Jews.

Even if you are a professional, it is very hard to get a good job. Some places do not have any Jews. As anti-Semitism escalates, the hardship for Jews increases. Anti-Semitism has always been an official policy of the Soviet Government. It is encouraged and supported by the government.

Jews are always blamed for the failing Soviet economy and for political problems inside the Soviet system. Anti-Semitic campaigns which are organized by the government have long served as an escape valve which is used to relieve the excess pressure and tenson inside the Soviet Union.

In spite of and possibly because of anti-Semitism, Jews want to learn something about their identity, about their roots. But it is not an easy task. There are only a few synagogues in the Soviet Union and some of them even do not have a rabbi.

In Kiev, where I am from, the Jewish population is approximately 150,000 people and there is only one synagogue and no rabbi. The president of this synagogue is on the KGB payroll and very proud that his son is a Communist and not religious. I personally was barred from this synagogue because this president said, this is only a place for old people to pray, and he would not allow me to pray inside.

My grandfather lived far from the synagogue and it was very difficult for him to get to that place, so he used to have a group of older men gather in his apartment to pray. These gatherings were often interrupted by local police, who confiscated their prayer books and other religious objects.

Even the study of Hebrew, the language of the Bible, is considered to be an anti-Soviet activity in the Soviet Union. Teaching of Hebrew is subject to prosecution and is illegal in Russia. My friend Iosif Begun, who was a Hebrew teacher, is now serving his third term in Siberia. He was sentenced last year to the maximum of 7 years labor camp and 5 years internal exile for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda," which means he was a Hebrew teacher.

Next month there are going to be Olympic games in Los Angeles. I would like to remind you about the Olympic games back in 1972, when 11 Israeli sportsmen on the Israeli Olympic team were killed in Munich by Arab terrorists. I and a group of my friends went to Babi Yar to say Kaddish, the Jewish prayer for the dead, on behalf of the slain sportsmen. Babi Yar is a ravine in Kiev where almost 100,000 Jews were killed during the German occupation of the city. My grandparents were killed there, too.

When we approached Babi Yar we were arrested by the police. We did not come to demonstrate; we just came to say a prayer for Israeli sportsmen who were killed in Munich. But we were arrested. Other Jews who were just passing by and who did not know what was going on were also arrested. Even some Russian and Ukrainian people who were merely onlookers were arrested, too, because they looked Jewish and KGB thought that they were Jews.

Most people were released in a few years after that, but 11 people were taken to court, charged with hooliganism, and put in prison. I and my friends spent 2 weeks in Kiev prison. Eleven Israeli sportsmen were killed in Munich and the following day 11 Soviet Jews went to prison.

After filing an application for an exit visa to Israel, I lost my job. I was not able to get another one. I was refused a visa for almost 4 years on the pretext of state security, without any further explanation. My telephone was disconnected.

I was physically attacked by KGB agents and was constantly in hiding. I was under surveillance by the KGB for those 4 years. For one example of my life in the Soviet Union is KGB agents could come during the night to my apartment and ring the doorbell for a couple of hours.

But I was lucky and in 1975 I left the Soviet Union for Israel. My friends were not so lucky. They are still in Russia.

All of you know Anatoly Shcharansky. He was refused an exit visa on the pretext of state security. He was a mathematician and never had access to any kind of secret information. He was, like other activists, refused a visa because the KGB wanted to keep him as a subject for future trials against Jewish dissidents, and when the time came they put him on trial.

Kim Fridman applied for an exit visa. He lost his job. He was not able to get another one. It's illegal in the Soviet Union not to work and he was sentenced to 1 year in prison.

Vladimir Kislik, a famous scientist—his field is nuclear physics—has been forced to work as a menial worker since his refusal. He was severely beaten by police, threatened, questioned in connectin with Shcharansky's trial. Shcharansky was sentenced to prison as a spy of CIA and Kiev KGB were looking for a CIA branch in Kiev. In 1981 he was entenced to 3 years in labor camp on charge of malicious hooliganism. Having served his term, he now lives in Kiev under constant surveillance by the KGB.

These are examples of only a few Soviet Jews who are trying to escape anti-Semitism and to find a national identity. Under present conditions, I do not see any future for Jews who wish to live as Jews in the Soviet Union. They have two alternatives, to assimilate or leave. Neither option seems possible at the present time.

Thank you very much for your attention.

[Mr. Tartakovsky's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF YULI TARTAKOVSKY, ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOVIET JEWRY

My name is Yuli Tartakovsky. I am 37 years old and, now, an American citizen. I was born in the Soviet Union and lived there until I was 28. I am presently working as a credit analyst in a major New York City bank.

I came here, today, to testify on behalf of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry (NCSJ) in order to share with you some of my personal experiences as a Jew in Russia. I have, however, attached for the record NCSJ fact sheets on Jewish religion and culture in the Soviet Union.

A Jew in the Soviet Union has "Jew" identified on his passport, and is singled out as being different. He is considered a second class citizen from birth and is labeled "Jew," whether or not he is religious. All Jews are oppressed in the Soviet Union to a greater or lesser degree.

I remember how difficult it was for me as a Jew to be accepted into the Soviet higher educational system. Some schools do not accept any Jews at all. Others have different admissions requirements for Jews and non-Jews. Still others keep the Jewish student body at a very low level.

Even if you are a professional, it is very hard to get a good job. Some places do not like Jews at all. As anti-Semitism escalates, the hardship for Jews increases.

Anti-Semitism has always been an official policy of the Soviet government. It is encouraged and supported by the government. Jews are blamed for the failing Soviet economy and for political problems inside the Soviet system. Anti-Semitic campaigns which are organized by the government have long served as an escape valve which is used to relieve the excess pressure and tension experienced by the Soviet people.

In spite of, and possibly because of, the anti-Semitism Soviet Jews became more interested in their roots. But it is not an easy task. There are only a few synagogues, and some do not even have rabbis. In Kiev, where the Jewish population is approximately 150,000, there is only one synagogue and no rabbi. The president of this synagogue is on the KGB payroll and boasts that his son is a communist and not religious. I personally was barred from this Kiev synagogue because the president said it is only a place for old people. He would not allow me to pray inside.

My grandfather lived far from the synagogue and had a group of older men gathering in his apartment to pray. These gatherings were often interrupted by the local police, who confiscated their prayer books and religious objects.

Even the study of Hebrew, the language of the Bible, is considered to be an anti-Soviet activity. Teaching it is illegal and subject to prosecution. My friend, Iosif Begun, who acted as a Hebrew teacher, is now serving his third term in Siberia. He was sentenced last year to the maximum of seven years labor camp and five years internal exile, for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda."

In September 1972, the eleven members of the Israeli Olympic Team were killed in Munich by Arab terrorists. I, and a group of my friends, went to Babi Yar to say Kaddish, the Jewish prayer for the dead, on behalf of the slain sportsmen. Babi Yar is a ravine in Kiev where almost 100,000 Jews were killed during the German occupation of the city. My grandparents were killed there, too.

When we approached Babi Yar we were arrested by the police. Jews who were passing by, and did not know what was going on, were also arrested. Some Russians and Ukrainians, who were merely onlookers, were also arrested if they "seemed Jewish." Most people were released in a few hours. Eleven people were taken to court, charged with "hooliganism," and put in prison. I and one of my friends spent two weeks in a Kiev prison. Eleven Israelis were killed in Munich and the following day eleven Soviet Jews were imprisoned.

September 29 is the anniversary of the massacre at Babi Yar. There is an official meeting attended by local party leaders. Soviet soldiers and citizens who were killed by the Nazis are commemorated. No Jews are mentioned. The KGB is always present at this ceremony, censoring inscriptions on wreaths for any evidence of Hebrew letters or themes, including the Star of David. Every year after my arrest, the KGB tried to prevent me from going to Babi Yar on the anniversary. I was followed, threatened and harassed by its agents.

After filing an application for an exit visa to Israel, I lost my job and was not able to get another one. I was refused a visa for almost four years on the pretext of "state security," without any further explanations. My telephone was disconnected. I was physically attacked by KGB agents, and was constantly in hiding. I was under constant surveillance by the KGB for those four years. Agents would come to my apartment door at night and ring the door bell for an hour.

I was fortunate. In 1975 I left the Soviet Union for Israel.

My friends were not so lucky.

Anatoly Shcharansky was also refused an exit visa on the pretext of "state security." He was a mathematican and never had any access to confidential information. He, like other activists, was refused a visa because the KGB wanted to keep him as a subject for future trials against Jewish activists. All of you know what happened to Shcharansky.

Kim Fridman applied for an exit visa in 1972. His wife and daughter were allowed to leave for Israel and he was told that he would be able to join them shortly. He lost his job, and was not able to get another one. He was sentenced to a year in prison for not working. He is still in Kiev, waiting for permission to join his family.

Vladimir Kislik, a Doctor of Sciences (equivalent to a PhD) in Physicis, has been forced to work at menial jobs since his refusal in 1973. He worked as a train conductor, a security guard and a factory worker. Since Kislik's application for an exit visa he has been severely beaten by the police, threatened, questioned in connection with Shcharansky's trial, held for fifteen days on charges of "hooliganism," and taken to a psychiatric institution. In 1981 he was sentenced to three years in a labor camp on charges of "malicious hooliganism." Having served his term, he now lives in Kiev under constant surveillance by the KGB.

These are only a few of the Soviet Jews trying to escape the pervasive anti-Semitism both present and future, and to find a national identity presently denied to them.

There are currently sixteen Jews imprisoned in the Soviet Union. They did not do anything unlawful. Nineteen former prisoners are still waiting for exit visas to Israel. Between 300,000 and 400,000 Jews are known to have requested affidavits from relatives in Israel -- the first step in the arduous emigration process. Last year, less than 1,500 were allowed to leave the Soviet Union.

Under present conditions, there is no future for Jews who wish to do so to live as Jews in the Soviet Union. For most of them there are only two alternatives: to assimilate or to leave. Neither option seems possible at the present time.

Thank you for your concern and attention.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOVIET JEWRY
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BASIC QUESTIONS ON JUDAISM IN THE USSR

Q: HOW DOES SOVIET POLICY AFFECT JEWISH RELIGIOUS PRACTICES?

A: The freedom to practice one's religion is strictly controlled, under the Council for Religious Affairs of the Council of Ministers, and teaching religion to minors (persons under 18) is illegal. There are no seminaries in the USSR to train rabbis; the few who wish to study have done so outside the country in Budapest, Hungary.

Jewish religious texts and ritual objects are not produced in the Soviet Union, despite claims by officials that they are available. Those brought into the country by visitors are often confiscated. In addition, many Jewish cemetaries and synagogues have been and continue to be desecrated or converted to other uses.

Because Jews are denied the right to pass on their rituals and traditions to younger generations, the Jewish religion may well face extinction in the Soviet Union.

Q: HOW MANY SYNAGOGUES ARE THERE IN THE SOVIET UNION?

A: According to a 1926 survey, over 1,000 synagogues operated in the USSR. By 1960, that number had dwindled to 467. In 1983, only 74 were known to have remained. This means one synagogue for roughly every 25,000 persons, if we use the 1979 census figures of 1.8 million Jews.

Unlike their Russian Orthodox counterparts, no synagogues have been permitted to join with other synagogues in regional or international associations, thus cutting off any spiritual or financial support system. In response to these strictures, private services (in Hebrew, minyanim), sprang up. In 1975, Soviet authorities enacted a statute prohibiting gatherings in buildings not specified for religious activities.

Participation in the Jewish religion is considered a voluntary act. While no formal Jewish religious community has been permitted, individual congregations can theoretically be registered at the request of 20 persons (dvadtsatka). In the last 20 years, however, no new congregation is known to have been qualified, although some Jews have tried.

Q: WHAT IS THE STATUS OF SOVIET RABBIS?

A: The most prominent rabbi is Adolf A. Shayevich, who was designated head of Moscow's Choral Synagogue upon the death of his predecessor, Yakov Fishman, in June 1983. Shayevich was born in 1937 in Khabarovsk, Birobidzhan. In 1975 he went to Budapest -- site of the only functioning rabbinical seminary in the Soviet bloc -- where he was ordained in 1981. One other Soviet Jew, now practing in Riga, was ordained last year; two, from Kiev and Odessa, are currently studying there. One man from Leningrad studied there and left without being ordained, in 1980.

The training of rabbinic candidates in Budapest is viewed as a response to Western critics concerning the lack of a functioning rabbinical seminary in the USSR, and documentation of Soviet abuses of Jewish religious and cultural life.

In Soviet Central Asia where, according to local tradition, formal ordination is not required in order to achieve the status of rabbi, a handful of unofficial community leaders, or hahamim, are known to serve.

Q: HOW HAS SOVIET POLICY ON NATIONALITY GROUPS AFFECTED JEWS?

A: In the Soviet Union, Jews ("Yevrei") are considered a national minority. Soviet ideology and law encourage nationalities to perpetuate their group existence through cultural and educational institutions and activities in their own languages. The lifeline to virtually all facets of Jewish culture, however, is being severed as authorities conduct a campaign to prevent a strengthening of Jewish languages and culture, and the documentation of Jewish history.

There are no Jewish communal or social organizations in the USSR, nor are there Jewish schools of any kind. Other nationalities are permitted to teach their history and culture in State-run schools in their native languages. The unofficial Jewish self-study groups, especially those for Hebrew study (ulpanim), organized to overcome this disability, are usually banned or forceably dispersed.

Q: WHAT IS THE STATUS OF HEBREW?

A: Teaching Hebrew is not recognized by the authorities as a legitimate profession, and the language may not be taught or studied by Jews. Ironically, it is available to non-Jewish foreign service candidates, customs officials and security police, or selected students, in three institutions.

Q: WHAT IS THE LEGAL STATUS OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN THE USSR?

A: In a formal sense, there is no Jewish community in the Soviet Union. In other East and some West European countries there do exist central Jewish bodies responsible for Jewish needs. In the USSR, there is an area near the Chinese border called the Jewish Autonomous Region (Oblast) of Birobidzhan. Only one half of one percent of the Jewish population (just over 10,000 people) lives there.

Q: HOW LARGE IS THE SOVIET JEWISH POPULATION?

A: According to the 1979 Soviet census, there were 1.8 million Jews in the USSR, making it the third largest Jewish population in the world, following the United States and Israel. This figure shows a decline from the 1970 census figure of 2.1 million Jews and the 1959 figure of 2.3 million, even allowing for those able to leave, and natural births. Some Western demographers estimate the true population as between 2.2 and 2.8 million.

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June 1984

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JEWISH CULTURE IN THE USSR

The Soviet Union is a multi-national state, with over 100 recognized nations and nationalities and, according to law, it grants equal rights to citizens of different nationalities, specifically with regard to "cultural life." Moreover, any "Violation of Equality of Rights of Nationalities and Races" is deemed a special crime. It is also the stated policy of the USSR to encourage the development of the various national cultures.

International obligations the USSR has assumed also commit it to facilitate the maintenance and development of national cultures, as expressed in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The agreement states that "In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their language."

In the specific area of education, the UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education stipulates that "It is essential to recognize the right of members of national minorities to carry on their own educational activities, including the maintenance of schools and, depending on the educational policy of each State, the use or the teaching of their own language. . ." Signatories are supposed to take "all necessary measures to ensure the application of the principles enunciated."

The Helsinki Final Act reinforces these obligations, not only by a general undertaking of the participating States to fulfill their obligations as set forth in the international declarations and agreements in this field, but also by specific references to national minorities, and by declaring that the participating States ". . . will afford them the full opportunity for the actual enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and will, in this manner, protect their legitimate interests in this sphere."

This declaration is strengthened by further statements in the sections on Culture and Education of the Final Act that "The participating states, recognizing the contribution that national minorities or regional cultures can make to cooperation among them in various fields of culture, intend, when such minorities or cultures exist within the territory, to facilitate this contribution, taking into account the legitimate interest of their members."

Soviet Jews, as is well known, are one of the recognized nationalities in the Soviet Union, ranking sixteenth in size among more than 100 nationalities. Yet, despite domestic and international law or standards, they remain culturally deprived.

There are still no Jewish schools in the USSR, not even in the remote Jewish Autonomous Oblast of Birobidzhan. There exist only two press organs: The Birobidzhaner Shtern, a Yiddish newspaper of four pages which appears five times a week in Birobidzhan in 1,000 copies; and the monthly Yiddish literary journal Sovetish Heymland, published in Moscow in 7,000 copies, of which apparently half are sent abroad. Not a single Jewish press organ is permitted in the Russian language, which is spoken by 97 percent of Soviet Jews.

Recently, these and other sanctioned channels of Jewish expression, however, were given a slight boost in an apparent effort to create the impression that Jewish culture is available in the USSR, while masking the reality of harassment. Accordingly, in what appears to be a diversionary tactic, Yiddish -- a language now spoken by less than 15% of Soviet Jews and not relevant to contemporary Soviet Jewry -- is emphasized as "the Jewish language," whereas Hebrew, the only tongue that has united Jews as a people through the centuries, remains suppressed.

Last year, Yiddish projects included the publication of the first primer since World War II, and the setting up of an advanced study course at Moscow's Gorky Institute of Literature open only to "politically acceptable" individuals. Printed in Birobidzhan, the primer was issued in 10,000 copies, equal to the entire Jewish population of the area, where less than one half of one percent of Soviet Jews live. A 40,000 word Russian-Yiddish dictionary is reportedly scheduled for publication.

In December, foreign press and diplomats were invited to a semi-official Yiddish musical based on Sholem Aleichem's "Tevyeh the Milkman" and its Broadway adaptation, "Fiddler on the Roof." The show was limited to two performances in an old, isolated theater south of Moscow. Despite this, hundreds of Jews came to the performances.

It is also worth comparing the average of six books published annually for nearly two million Jews with the corresponding figures (for the year 1978) relating to some other Soviet nationalities: 46 books for 622,000 Maris, 70 for 542,000 Ossetinians and 166 for 1,371,000 Bashkirs (Pechat SSSR v 1978 godu, Moscow Statistical Publishers, 1979, pp. 20-21).

On the other hand, the number of Russian translations of Yiddish books, which would be more important, since more than 85 percent of Soviet Jews no longer speak

Yiddish, has radically declined: in the years 1959 to 1970 an annual average of 25 translated volumes were published; in 1971 to 1975 an average of 14; while in the years 1976 to 1978 the average number was 9 per year. Similarly, translated items of Jewish literature and literary criticism are also gradually disappearing from non-Jewish Soviet journals; in 1959 to 1968 their annual average was 51, in 1969 to 1975 it was 50, but in the years 1976 to 1978 such items dropped to an average of 14.

Until recently, there was only one professional Jewish theatre, the Moscow Jewish Dramatic Ensemble which, however, is a travelling company without a building of its own. In 1978 permission was given to form a Jewish Chamber Musical Theatre. This was undoubtedly a concession to Jewish demands in the USSR and abroad, but made under bizarre conditions: though the theatre could travel in the country, it had officially to be based in Birobidzhan.

The performances by both theatres are enthusiastically welcomed by Jews, but the difficulty is that their activities are extremely restricted. For instance, the Moscow Ensemble could not perform in Moscow from the summer of 1974 until December 1978; no Jewish theatre could visit Minsk until 1978; and Leningrad, Kiev and Kharkov are still out of bounds for Jewish theatres.

There still does not exist a single other Jewish cultural institution, lecture course, publishing house, or artistic establishment, with the exception of the Sholem Aleichem Library in Birobidzhan. In 1979, a memorial museum to Sholem Aleichem was established in his birth-place, Pereyaslav-Khmelnitsky.

It is natural that under these circumstances Soviet Jews, anxious to preserve their national cultural heritage, should hope to obtain the necessary tools from their brethren abroad. Such efforts are not only perfectly legitimate, they are specifically encouraged in the Helsinki Final Act, which aims at facilitating "freer and wider dissemination of all kinds." The Final Act also encourages "contacts and cooperation among persons active in the field of culture," and "among persons engaged in cultural activities." Moreover, the contribution of national minority cultures to cooperation in the cultural field is especially emphasized.

In spite of this, attempts to send to Soviet Jews books or teaching manuals on completely non-political subjects like the Jewish religion, law or ethics, history, art, literature, the Holocaust, belles-lettres, children's books, song books or dictionaries and language books for the teaching of Hebrew, have been thwarted by the authorities. Such books are either confiscated or simply disappear in the mail. Among the books barred were the works of Nobel laureates Isaac Bashevis Singer and Saul Bellow, the UNESCO publications Social life and Social Values of the Jewish People, the Holocaust novel Le Dernier des Justes by Andre Schwarz-Bart, and studies on Jewish history by such distinguished historians as professors Shmuel Ettinger and Cecil Roth. Both confiscation and disappearance in the mail indicate interference with the privacy of correspondence and communication, which is guaranteed both under international agreements and in the Soviet Constitution.

The Soviet approach to Jewish minority culture and religion is clear. It is to aggressively combat them or drive them underground. In so doing, Soviet authorities give additional validity to Jews who seek repatriation to Israel.

June, 1984

SOVIET JEWRY RESEARCH BUREAU

JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM THE USSR

STATISTICS

1965 - June 1967	4,498	1975	13,221
Oct. 1968 - 1970	4,235	1976	14,261
1971	13,022	1977	16,736
1972	31,681	1978	28,864
1973	34,733	1979	51,320
1974	20,628	1980	21,471

	1981		1982		1983		1984	
January	850	(24.9)*	290	(26.9)*	81	(23.5)*	88	(25.0)*
February	1,407	(15.8)	283	(21.9)	125	(27.2)	90	(54.4)
March	1,249	(14.3)	289	(27.3)	101	(32.7)	51	(35.2)
April	1,155	(15.5)	288	(29.5)	114	(9.6)	74	(32.4)
May	1,141	(15.8)	205	(27.8)	116	(29.3)	109	(45.9)
June	866	(14.5)	182	(27.5)	102	(38.2)		
July	779	(22.2)	186	(23.1)	167	(22.8)		
August	430	(22.3)	238	(20.2)	130	(22.3)		
September	405	(28.6)	246	(20.7)	135	(40.0)		
October	368	(24.2)	168	(34.5)	90	(46.2)		
November	363	(25.0)	137	(38.0)	56	(42.9)		
December	434	(22.8)	176	(39.8)	97	(32.0)		
	9,447	(18.6)	2,688	(27.3)	1,314	(29.5)		

From October 1968 - May 1984, 264,033 persons left the Soviet Union with Israeli visas. Approximately 163,033 of them went to Israel.

*Figures represent the percentage of those who proceeded to Israel.

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National Conference on Soviet Jewry

NEWS RELEASE

July 29, 1983

KAMPELMAN EXPRESSES GUARDED OPTIMISM OVER MADRID AGREEMENT AT NCSJ MEETING

NEW YORK -- Ambassador Max M. Kampelman, Chairman, U.S. delegation to the Madrid Follow-up Meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, expressed guarded optimism over the Madrid agreement at a meeting convened by the National Conference on Soviet Jewry (NCSJ).

Mr. Kampelman pointed out that the Madrid talks made some improvements over the original Helsinki Accords adopted in 1975, specifically with regard to human and religious rights and "human contacts," notably family reunification. The talks, he said, "raised the standards" by which the international community judges nations and laid the groundwork "for a better world" in the future.

The Ambassador stressed that Madrid was not a forum at which any nation, including the Soviet Union, was prepared to make major alterations in their emigration policy. He added, however, that it has served as the only continuous forum for U.S.-Soviet dialogue in recent years, especially in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the resulting freeze in relations.

Mr. Kampelman asserted that the campaign on behalf of Jews in the Soviet Union is being conducted on many levels, private and public, and reaffirmed that the role of the NCSJ -- and the total American Jewish community -- is one in which it is "essential to be energetic and to be active."

NCSJ Issues Statement

Following the meeting, Morris B. Abram, in his new role as NCSJ Chairman, took note of the fact that August 1, which commemorates the signing of the original Helsinki Accords on August 1, 1975, has been declared Helsinki Human Rights Day by President Ronald Reagan. Mr. Abram welcomed the President's support of the Helsinki process, but stressed that there is "little solace" for Soviet Jews in the Madrid agreement, which provides for a follow-up meeting on human rights in two years and one on human contacts a year later.

In a statement issued by the NCSJ, Mr. Abram pointed out that "Jews in the Soviet Union continue to languish in prison, to suffer increasingly restricted access to higher education and employment, and are victims of a rampant anti-Semitic campaign, including that in the media, organized under the guise of 'anti-Zionism'."

Mr. Abram asserted that "Recent public statements suggest that promises of Soviet action on human rights are soon to be implemented." He stressed that the NCSJ will "await evidence of a positive change in the near future and, of course, we would welcome significant progress."

The National Conference on Soviet Jewry is the central coordinating agency for policy and action in this country on behalf of more than two million Jews in the Soviet Union.

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STATEMENT ON MADRID CONFERENCE

The National Conference on Soviet Jewry remains a firm supporter of the "Helsinki process", which began with the first Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, in Helsinki, in 1975.

We are pleased that the present Administration has viewed the process as an important instrument to help ensure the security of people and nations. While we are aware of the limits of the Helsinki Final Act, the basic accords should continue to be a part of U.S. foreign policy.

We now take note of the final document approved at the current meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Madrid. We are cognizant of the fact that the head of the U.S. delegation, Ambassador Max M. Kampelman, has eloquently articulated the issue of human rights, giving particular attention to the plight of Soviet Jews. We also appreciate the concern of our NATO allies, and of those neutral and non-aligned nations who have supported the U.S. position.

We find little solace, however, in the compromise agreement reached at the Madrid meeting. While we welcome the promise of a follow-up special meeting on human rights scheduled to occur two years hence, and the promise of a meeting on emigration to be held three years hence, Jews in the Soviet Union continue to languish in prison, to suffer increasingly restricted access to higher education and employment, and are victims of a rampant anti-Semitic campaign, including that in the media, organized under the guise of "anti-Zionism".

That two families of Pentecostals have emigrated from the U.S.S.R. may be a sign of hope, and we rejoice in their good fortune. There are, however, between 3 - 400,000 Jews who have taken the first step in the process to be repatriated to Israel, and are still waiting. There are families who have been trying for over a decade. The final document may continue to leave them in limbo, and in peril, for years.

Recent public statements suggest that promises of Soviet action on human rights are soon to be implemented. We await evidence of a positive change in the near future and, of course, we would welcome significant progress.

In the meantime we will continue to monitor events and to speak the truth.

July 28, 1983

- over -

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOVIET JEWRY
10 East 40th Street Suite 907
New York, New York 10016

"THE ROLE OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT"

(BASED ON A STATEMENT SUBMITTED TO THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE, 1984 PLATFORM COMMITTEE HEARING, APRIL 9, 1984, NEW YORK.)

America cannot ignore the treatment of thousands of Soviet Jews, as well as others, who are persecuted for their beliefs and are virtually held hostage in their own country.

To be effectively involved, we urge the following principles, bearing in mind that we believe the Administration is pursuing the right course in the effort to help the Jews in the Soviet Union. In fact, the Administration, and Republicans and Democrats in Congress, are deeply concerned about human rights issues, and it is gratifying to note that we are united on such matters.

1. Secretary of State George P. Shultz has told the National Conference on Soviet Jewry how he has emphasized human rights matters, including those of Soviet Jews, in his meetings with the Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei A. Gromyko. This is commendable. Our Western allies should be equally vigilant. We need the leaders of the free world to speak up on the plight of Soviet Jews at every opportunity. We urge them to raise the broad issues of emigration and the violation of rights, as well as the specific cases of individuals who have requested such intervention. The U.S. should continue all efforts to enlist such support from our allies, as well as from neutral and non-aligned nations.

2. In view of the overall situation, the Administration and the Congress must continue to demonstrate to Moscow that this issue is a fundamental stumbling block on the path of improved relations. One way to send a signal is to hold firm on the Jackson-Vanik Amendment to the 1975 Trade Reform Act, which links the granting of trade benefits to the USSR and other countries to performance with regard to emigration. Should the present harassment of applicants for emigration end, and should the yearly levels climb to a significant number, the amendment could provide the possibility for increased trade to match such improvements.

3. The United States must convey its deep concern over the persecution of Soviet Jews at every opportunity we get -- such as during negotiations over grain and maritime rights, as well as at any summit meeting. Soviet treatment of its Jewish minority must be effectively woven into the fabric of a continuing U.S.-Soviet relationship. An effort should be made to ensure that the issue is raised at all contact points between the U.S. and the USSR, and that it becomes fundamental to the relationship between the two powers. The issue should be organically linked to every agenda item in future dealings with the Soviet Union, rather than attaching it on an ad hoc basis to narrow issues as they arise.

4. Bilateral problems, regional conflicts, and security matters are among the issues that will be discussed at a summit, when that occurs. Emigration is not primary to the Soviet Union, and there is every reason to believe that if the United States negotiated properly, great headway might be made.

5. We welcome suggestions for improved atmospherics between the United States and the Soviet Union, such as the proposal to establish a consulate in Kiev, and to increase some cultural contacts. After years of stalemate, these and other initiatives might create

an environment in which progress would take place in regard to Jewish emigration and other human rights issues, as well as in other critical areas of bilateral and multilateral concern. If these moderate shifts take place, we should probe Soviet reactions to help determine any next steps.

6. We expect there will be private and official contacts to promote long term agreements with the Soviet Union. These contacts, however, must provide important opportunities that should be used to clarify the American people's support for human rights, especially the right to leave. We urge the Office of the United States Trade Representative, and other cabinet-level agencies, to place this issue on the agenda of talks with Soviet counterparts, with the expectation of performance.

7. We express our support for the position of the U.S. delegation at the Madrid review session of the Helsinki Final Act (1975). While we recognize that there are limits to the "Helsinki process," we believe its use as an instrument of foreign policy, and as an international standard, to be of value. We are mindful that the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe provided significant support to our delegation, and we urge its strengthening. We trust that its funding will be kept at the level necessary to perform its tasks. Efforts in the Congress to create separate House and Senate Committees should be rejected, for this will weaken the Commission.

8. The content and technical quality of the Voice of America, should be upgraded, in terms of broadcasts to the Soviet Union, as one way to break through the curtain of misinformation.

9. This government must press with vigor appropriate international agencies, such as the International Postal Union, and Soviet authorities, to allow the delivery of mail to Soviet citizens. The effort by Soviet bureaucrats to obstruct the delivery of mail, and to isolate Jewish activists and refuseniks from friends and family, is cruel and is a violation of international norms and law, and should be pursued by the international community.

10. Our government should expand the use of the complaint procedures of international agencies, including UNESCO and the ILO, as a means of focusing attention on persecuted individuals. The Soviet policy of enforced assimilation, cultural genocide, artificial restrictions on emigration, and using job security to threaten Jews, are among the violations of international agreements. We believe that increased international debate will help bring about an end to such practices.

11. Congressional advocacy on behalf of Soviet Jews, in the form of letters, resolutions and verbal support, can make the difference in one person's life. They also help demonstrate popular support to the Administration and to Soviet officials. If Soviet leaders do not believe that the President is serious, Washington's limited leverage with respect to Soviet Jews will be further limited, as it will be in other areas.

12. We must continue to protest anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, and the use by the Soviet Union and its allies of the United Nations as a megaphone to broadcast anti-Semitism throughout the world. The Soviet Union is, unfortunately, the only great power since Hitler's Germany to allow anti-Semitism to be used as an instrument of official policy.

In the end we hope that Konstantin Chernenko, the new Soviet leader, might allow emigration to increase because of his closeness to the late Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev, under whose regime more than 260,000 Jews left the USSR. This is not just a "Jewish issue" or a "Western issue." It is a fundamental matter of human rights recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Helsinki Final Act.

April 1984

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Your story is an extremely interesting one, and I am just sorry that we ran out of time.

Next we will hear from Mr. John Hvasta, executive director of the Slovak-American National Council.

Senator Pell, first do you have an opening statement?

Senator PELL. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

I am very glad indeed that the committee is holding this hearing on freedom of religion in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. In signing the Helsinki Final Act, the Soviet Union and its allies pledged to recognize and respect the freedom of the individual to profess and practice his religion. In spite of this solemn pledge, these states have severely limited religious freedom through restrictive laws and excessive control over church affairs.

To discourage individuals from pursuing an active religious life, many of the Warsaw Pact states subject religious believers to discrimination in other areas, such as employment and housing. In some states, notably Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, religious believers and clergy are brutally persecuted and often imprisoned. These actions blatantly violate the spirit and the letter of the Helsinki accord.

As a member and former cochairman of the Helsinki Commission, I have long been concerned about the failure of the Soviet Union and its allies to fulfil the commitments on religious freedom undertaken in the Final Act. Last August, when I visited the Soviet Union, I expressed concern about the plight of religious believers to then Chairman Andropov. Recently I introduced Senate Concurrent Resolution 119, which condemns infringment on religious freedom, discrimination on religious grounds, and persecution of religious believers by the governments of the Warsaw Pact states.

I agree that we should do all that we can to try to make sure that the individuals who are living behind the Iron Curtain—which we hope is not there forever, but for this generation and the next it may well be there—that these people are allowed to practice their religion without fear and without harm.

I particularly want to welcome Mr. Hvasta here. We have been friends for more than 35 years now, I guess, He has suffered greatly and we owe him a great debt for being here and telling us his views.

Thank you, John.

[Mr. Hvasta's biographical data follows:]

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF JOHN HVASTA

Date of Birth—June 2, 1927, Czechoslovakia (U.S. citizen deriv.) Entered United States to join father 4-16-39. Navy—1945-46

Profession: President, American Public Research Council, Oakton, VA. 1972—Self Employed.

Previous Employment: U.S. Air Force, Congressional Liaison, The Pentagon, 1981. U.S. House of Representatives, 1964-69; 1970-72.

Administrative Aide—Representative J. Herbert Burke, FL; Legislative Aide—Representative Hastings Keith, MA; Press Aide—Representative Paul Findley IL; Research Assistant—Representative Edward J. Derwinski, IL.

American Security Council.—1969-70. Executive Director, Washington Office.

The Library of Congress.—1962-64. Soviet Area Specialist.

Republican National Committee.—1960. Director of Nationalities Division.

Self Employed.—1954-60. Newark, New Jersey—New York City. Reporter-Photographer; Advertising Executive; Radio-TV programs producer-director. Writer-lecturer.

Education: Upsala College, NJ. 1946-48. University of Bratislava, Czechoslovakia (Jan.-Oct. 48). B.A.—University of Southern California—Communications. M.A.—The American University—Comparative Gov'ts EE. PhD. Candid.—The American University—Soviet Area Studies.

1948-54—College Exchange student in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia (Jan.-Oct. 16, 1948) and part time employee of U.S. Consulate. Was unjustly arrested on Oct. 16, 1948, held for 38½ months, secretly tried and sentenced to 3 years at hard labor—later increased to 10 years—escaped and hid for 21 months before making way to U.S. Embassy in Prague, and back home 4 months later. In 1974, the Czechoslovak Government reviewed the case and exonerated me.

STATEMENT OF JOHN HVASTA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SLOVAK-AMERICAN NATIONAL COUNCIL, OAKTON, VA

Mr. HVASTA. Thank you, Senator, and Mr. Chairman.

Just briefly, let me give a little outline of my experiences in Czechoslovakia. When I was 20 years old, an ex-GI and in the Navy, I decided to visit Czechoslovakia in an exchange program. I arrived in Bratislava, where the now distinguished Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. Pell, was in charge of the American Consulate.

I got a part-time job with him then, prior to his departure back to the States on October 16, 1948. He left at noon. Three hours later, I was invited to visit the state secret security headquarters for a half hour, the secret police said. And then 38 months later, during which time I was falsely accused of being a spy, mistreated mercilessly in an effort to get me to sign a false confession, given a secret trial and a 3-year sentence at hard labor, which was later increased to 10 years, I had lost hope of ever getting justice in Czechoslovakia and prayed that I would somehow be able to get out from one of the most secure prisons, the Leopoldov Fortress.

Thank God, I was able to escape with five others. Unfortunately, two were later recaptured. One was shot, the other one died in prison. I hid in the countryside in Czechoslovakia for 21 months, slowly making my way to our Embassy in Prague, where I ran to asylum. Four months later, I left in a diplomatic car to West Germany and back home to Hillside, NJ.

I lost over 5 years from my life. I was 20 when I went over there and 26 when I returned. While I was in prison in Pankrac and Jachimov uranium mines in Bohemia, and in Slovakia at Justicny Palac and Leopoldov Fortress, there were also incarcerated four Slovak Catholic bishops; Jan Vojtassak of the Spis Diocese; Michal Buzalka from Bratislava; Pavel Gojdic, the Byzantine Catholic bishop from Presov; and his auxiliary bishop, Basil Hopko.

I also knew about the Czech bishops who were in various prisons and work camps during those fateful years from 1948 on: Archbishop Josef Beran; Bishops Josef Hlouch, Karel Skoupy, Stepan Trochta, Morie Picha, Karel Otcenasek; also, Bishops Stanislav Zela, Stefan Barnes and Ladislav Hlad, and Cardinal Frantisek Tomasek of Prague. Bishop Gojdic died in prison and Bishop Theodor Romza was killed by Soviet authorities in Munkacevo.

We had also over 100 priests and ministers incarcerated in Leopoldov alone, including Lutheran ministers and Jewish rabbis. Their crime was that they refused to be puppets of the regime. Instead, they wanted to continue to fulfill their religious duties, to inspire their faithful to do good, to abide by the commandments.

I worked with pick and shovel with Bishop Buzalka, an ascetic, saintly man of the cloth who was then reduced to a mere number, swinging his pick as I was in that bitter cold winter of 1951 before I escaped. It brought back memories of the persecution of the early Christians during the Roman times, when the faithful were sent to face the lions. That was almost 2,000 years ago, and humanity measures progress by the degree of freedom each individual can enjoy in the environment in which he lives and to which he dedicates his loyalty and life.

During those turbulent years from 1948 the church, especially in Slovakia, particularly the Byzantine rite, was virtually wiped out. It was almost total decimation. Both of the Greek Catholic bishops were imprisoned. Their clergy were either in prisons or camps, and the faithful threatened not to continue going to church.

The government permitted the Orthodox Church, directed from Soviet Ukraine, to take over the church buildings. People were forced to pray in their homes, which in due time even there they were not safe. Children were questioned by their teachers about such practices, and if the parents wanted their children to go to higher education, things like praying or going to Roman Catholic or Lutheran churches were examples of antistate activity, punishable by denial of government privileges such as entry to schools of higher learning, promotion in jobs and so on.

Only those who have lived through such harassment can attest to the "back to the catacombs" period in Czechoslovakia. I will not detail the blemished record of the Czechoslovak Government which inspired such man's inhumanity to man now, but I will add it to the total analysis for printing in the hearing's record, to show just how unreasonable that government has been from 1948 to the present time.

Now the priests and bishops are no longer sentenced to wither away and die as martyrs for their faith in the various prisons where I lived with them. Now the methods are more refined.

Last year on Palm Sunday, at 7 a.m., the STB—the State Secret Police arm of the Prague regime—raided simultaneously, at precisely the same time, homes and churches in 13 different cities in Slovakia, in Bratislava, Hlohovec, Košice, Prešov, Trstena, Tvrdošin, Ružomberok, Lubochňa, Poprad, Svit, Vranov, and Humenne. They searched the premises and arrested all persons present.

In Bohemia and Moravia, the same procedures were followed at the same time. The arrests were directed at persons who dedicated their lives to religion. Many were of the Franciscan Order of St. Francis of Assisi.

Senators, I call your attention to both the press releases and formal accusations of the Czechoslovak courts against these poor victims of the most truculent of the Communist governments of the Soviet system. Can one imagine what kind of a machinery it must have organized and commanded to go after the servants of God who try to teach the citizens of Czechoslovakia to "obey the Commandments."

When the decimation of the clergy was not having as great an effect as the government had hoped, it created its own religious order. They called it "Pacem in Terris," Peace in Our Land, an organization into which they lured half-schooled seminary students and compromised priests.

It was supposed to replace the ecclesiastical authority in Czechoslovakia, since the regime refused to allow new bishops to be appointed by the Holy See of Rome. Out of 13 dioceses in Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia, only 4 still have a bishop, mostly very aged. Three dioceses in Slovakia are still vacant, after 30 years.

When a human being cannot exercise his basic freedoms, he or she becomes inventive. When young people were threatened with reprisals about attending churches, they met in private homes and apartments to have religious readings or secret mass. Since the big brother is always for real under a Communist system and follows every move, such young people found themselves in prisons and before socialist judges.

Thank you very much, Senator.

[Mr. Hvasta's prepared statement and attachments follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN HVASTA

Dear Senators of this most prestigious of our governmental legislative committees—the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee. You are the eyes and ears of our Government to listen and determine the veracity of the grievances brought before you on subjects of great concern to us as Americans and as peoples of the free world. We ask you to judge the issues when foreign governments violate the most basic of human rights—the freedom of religious expression—and then seek special privileges from the U.S. Government such as MFN, the Most Favored Nation economic trade status, or exports of our vital technology, or bank loan guarantees from international organizations to which the U.S. Government contributes substantially.

Today you have heard and will hear more said about the denial of the basic freedoms to peoples living inside the Communist world. My aspect will deal with such denial of the basic rights and freedoms to peoples I know so well because I emanate from their midst. I was born in the Slovak part of Czechoslovakia. When I was about 10, my mother brought my brother and me to join my father, who first came to the States after World War I. My maternal grandfather came to the States in 1870 to work on the railroad in the West.

Before I was 18, I joined the Navy in 1945 to help in our effort to fight Nazi despotism. When I was 20, I returned to see my birthplace in Eastern Slovakia and to study on a college exchange program. I arrived in Bratislava on January 30, about 25 days prior to the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia. In the meantime, I got a part time job working for our U.S. Consulate. The distinguished Senator from Rhode Island, Claiborne Pell, was the officer in charge and I worked for him for a time prior to his departure back to the States on October 16, 1948. He left at noon. Three hours later, I was "invited" to visit the State Secret Security headquarters for a "half-hour." Thirty-eight months later, during which time I was falsely accused of being a "spy"; mistreated mercilessly in an effort to get me to sign a false confession; given a secret trial and a 3-year sentence at hard labor later increased to 10 years—I had lost hope of ever getting justice in Czechoslovakia and prayed that I'd get out somehow from one of the most secure of prisons—the Leopoldov Fortress.

Thank God, I was able to get out with five others from the Alcatraz of Eastern Europe where over 1,200 other political prisoners were herded. It was a small miracle . . . and would have been perfect but for the recapture of two from our group—one was shot and the other a young high school boy, died in prison. I hid in Slovakia for 21 months, slowly making way for our Embassy in Prague, where I ran to asylum. Four months later, I left in a diplomatic car to West Germany—officially expelled. I lost over 5 years from my life—I was 20 when I went to Czechoslovakia, and 26, when I finally got back home to New Jersey, where we then lived. While I was imprisoned in Pankrac and Jachimov uranium mines in Bohemia, and in Slovakia in Justicny Palac and Leopoldov Fortress, there were also incarcerated four Slovak Catholic Bishops—Jan Vojtassak of the Spis Diocese; Michal Buzalka from Bratislava; Pavel Gojdic, the Byzantine Catholic Bishop from Presov, and his Auxiliary Bishop Basil Hopko. I also knew about the Czech Bishops who were in various prisons and work camps during those fateful years from 1948 to 1952; Archbishop Josef Beran, Bishops Josef Hlouch, Karel Skoupy, Stepan Trochta, Morie Picha, Karel Otcenasek. Also Bishops Stanislav Zeia, Stefan Barnes and Ladislav Hlad and Cardinal Frantisek Tomasek of Prague. Bishop Gojdic died in prison and Bishop Theodor Romza was killed by Soviet authorities in Munkacevo. I ask the Senators to check Document No. 1.

We had also over a 100 priests and ministers incarcerated in Leopoldov alone—including Lutheran ministers and Jewish rabbis. Their crime was that they refused to be puppets of the Communist regime. Instead they wanted to continue to fulfill their religious duties—to inspire their faithful to do good: to abide by the Commandments—not to cheat, steal.

I worked with pick and shovel with Bishop Buzalka, an ascetic, saintly man of the cloth who was then reduced to a mere number, swinging his pick as I was in that bitter cold winter of 1951. It brought back memories of the persecution of the early Christians during the Roman times—when the faithful were sent to face the lions. That was almost 2,000 years ago. And, humanity measures progress by the degree of freedom each individual can enjoy in the environment in which he lives and to which he dedicates his loyalty and life. During those turbulent years from 1948-52, the Church, especially in Slovakia—particularly the Byzantine Rite—was virtually wiped out. It was almost total decimation. Both of the Greek Catholic (or Byzantine Rite) bishops were in prison, their clergy either in prisons or work camps, and the faithful threatened not to continue going to church. The government permitted the Orthodox church, directed from Soviet Ukraine, to take over the church buildings. The people were forced to pray in their homes, which in due time even there they were not safe. Children were questioned by their teachers about such practices and if parents wanted their children to go on to higher education, things like "praying" or "going to Roman Catholic churches" (or even Lutheran) were examples of "anti-State activity" punishable by denial of government privileges—such as entry to schools of higher education, promotion in jobs, etc. Only those who had lived through such harassment can attest to "Back to the Catacombs" period in Czechoslovakia, one of the most progressive countries prior to the Communist takeover.

I won't detail the blemished record of the Czechoslovak Government which inspired such "Man's Inhumanity to Man" now, but I will add it to the total analysis for printing in the hearings record to show just how unreasonable that government has been from 1948 to the present day. Now, the priests and bishops are no longer sentenced to wither away and die as martyrs for their faith in the various prisons where I lived with them. Now, the methods are more refined.

Last year on Palm Sunday, at 7 a.m., the STB, the State Secret Police arm of the Prague regime, raided simultaneously, at precisely the same time, homes and churches in 13 different cities in Slovakia, in Bratislava, Hlohovec, Kosice, Presov, Trstena, Tvrdosin, Ruzomberok, Lubochna, Poprad, Svit, Vranov, and Humenne. They searched the premises and arrested all persons present. In Bohemia and Moravia, the same procedure was followed—at the same time as in Slovakia. The arrests were directed against persons who dedicated their lives to religion. Many were of the Franciscan Order of St. Frances of Assisi. Senators, I call your attention to both press releases and formal accusations of the Czechoslovak Courts against these poor victims of the most truculent of Communist governments of the Soviet system in Document No. 2. Can one imagine what kind of machinery it must have organized and commanded to go after the servants of God—who try to teach the citizens in Czechoslovakia to "obey the Commandments."

When the decimation of the clergy was not having as great an effect as the government had hoped, it created its own religious order. They called it "Pacem in Terris"—Peace in our Land—an organization into which they lured half-schooled seminary students and compromised priests. It was supposed to replace the Ecclesiastical Authority in Czechoslovakia. . . since the Regime refused to allow new bishops to be appointed by the Holy See of Rome. Out of 13 dioceses in Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia, only four still have a bishop (mostly very aged): three dioceses in Slovakia are still vacant, after 30 years. Document No. 3.

When a human being cannot exercise his basic freedoms, he or she become inventive. When young people were threatened with reprisals about attending churches, they met in private homes and apartments to have religious readings or a secret Mass. Since the "Big Brother" is for real under the Communist system and follows every move, such young people found themselves in prisons and before the Socialist Judges. I call your attention once again to the record on this act of harassment inside the Czech and Slovak land in this year of our enlightenment.

Gentlemen, I wish I had time to really unfold the entire sorry record of what is happening to other human beings on this planet of ours. But, it is here, and we will offer it for the record to show just how far have some individuals in Prague and Bratislava have gone to institute inhuman harassment against their own fellow citizens. This mistreatment is not directed against us Americans. Thank God that they do not dictate our way of life. But, it is directed against their very own people; against those whom they should inspire—to help build that System, which is now so paranoid about the effects of the Polish Solidarity experiment that it must resort to deny the very basic of human rights. We plead with you that when the Czechoslovak regime seeks international loan guarantees for its system directed against our way of life—when it will seek to obtain the MFN, or when they will want to purchase our most sophisticated technology—that you, our Dear Legislators, tell them to "cease and desist" from such acts of inhumanity against their own people.

The Czechoslovak Government is a signatory of the Helsinki Accord guaranteeing Human Rights—including religious freedom—in their realm. Until you, too, hold your hand up to the Husaks in Prague to tell them, "No deal until you begin to treat your own people as human beings," can real peace be assured.

Senators, in the spirit of our own faith we, the over 5 million Americans of Czech and Slovak heritage, offer the leadership in Czechoslovakia an invitation. Cease with the harassment of your people and our brethren. Permit them the freedoms that every human being yearns for. Only then can that human being develop the Best—Create and Find the cures which still plague the world. The constant tensions caused by governmental harassment only creates misfits and psychological cretins. We, in the United States of Slovak and Czech heritage, would like a different dialogue, than be forced to speak on behalf of those who are being persecuted. We would rather come and visit and enjoy seeing the land of our fathers and forefathers. Take heed of the kind of Slovak or Czech Americans which have emerged under our System—like astronaut Eugene Cernan, author Michal Novak, Theologian Jaroslav Pelikan, Nobel Prize Winner for Medicine Dr. Carleton Gajdusek, and many, many others who have helped enrich our lives. We look forward to a positive response.

Thank you.

89th Congress }
1st Session }

COMMITTEE PRINT

THE CHURCH AND STATE UNDER COMMUNISM

A SPECIAL STUDY

OF THE

SUBCOMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE
ADMINISTRATION OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY
ACT AND OTHER INTERNAL SECURITY LAWS

TO THE

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
UNITED STATES SENATE

VOLUME VI

HUNGARY
CZECHOSLOVAKIA
GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

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CHURCH AND STATE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

(By Dr. Stefan Kocvara)

The Communist Party seized power in Czechoslovakia on February 25, 1948. Since that time the following laws affecting the churches were enacted:

1. Law No. 131/1948 Coll. on the Liquidation of the Legal Status of the German Evangelical Church in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia.
2. Law No. 217/1949 Coll. Establishing the Government Bureau for Church Affairs.[1]
3. Law No. 218/1949 Coll. to Provide Economic Security for Churches and Religious Associations through the Government.
4. Cab. Decree No. 219/1949 Coll. to Provide Economic Security to the Roman Catholic Church through the Government.
5. Cab. Decree No. 220/1949 Coll. to Provide Economic Security to the Czechoslovak Church through the Government.
6. Cab. Decree No. 221/1949 Coll. to Provide Economic Security to the Evangelical [Protestant] Churches through the Government.
7. Cab. Decree No. 222/1949 Coll. to Provide Economic Security to the Orthodox Church through the Government.
8. Cab. Decree No. 223/1949 Coll. to Provide Economic Security to Religious Associations through the Government.
9. Cab. Decree No. 228/1949 Coll. on the Jurisdiction and Organization of the Government Bureau for Church Affairs.
10. Cab. Decree No. 35/1949 Coll. on Provincial People's Committees' Sections Concerning General Internal Affairs, as amended (Cab. Decree No. 233/1949).
11. Proclamation No. 320/1950 Off. Gaz. of the Government Bureau for Church Affairs Concerning the Functions of the General Internal Affairs Divisions of the Provincial People's Committees in Church and Religious Matters and Concerning the Establishment of Church Sections.
12. No. 351/1950 Off. Gaz. Proclamation of the Government Bureau for Church Affairs on the Assumption of the Management of Some Property Assets by the Religious Fund.
13. No. 352/1950 Off. Gaz. Proclamation of the Government Bureau for Church Affairs on the Religious Fund.
14. Secs. 101 and 236 of the Criminal Code (Law No. 140/1961).

The laws listed above under items 2, 3, 4, 9, and 11 were translated into English and are contained in the publication: Vladimír Gsovski, editor, Church and State Behind the Iron Curtain. New York, Praeger, 1955, p. 40 ff.

Law No. 217/1949 Coll. (item 2) and Cabinet Decree No. 228/1949 Coll. (item 9) deal with the Government agency, Government Bureau for Church Affairs, which until 1956 was in charge of Church affairs.

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[1] The Government Bureau for Church Affairs was abolished (Cab. Decree No. 19/1956 Coll. sec. 2). Fundamental church matters were transferred from the jurisdiction of the Government Bureau for Church Affairs to the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Schools and Culture (ibid.).

By Cabinet Decree No. 19/1956 Coll. the Bureau was abolished and its jurisdiction transferred to the Ministry of Schools and Culture.

Law No. 218/1949 Coll. (item 3) provides for economic security for churches and religious associations through the Government in general, while Cab. Decrees Nos. 219–222/1949 Coll. (items 4–7) provide such security for the Roman Catholic Church, the Czechoslovak Church, the Protestant Churches, the Orthodox Church and religious associations. Only No. 219/1949 Coll. of these decrees has been translated. It is concerned with the Roman Catholic Church. The rest of these decrees are built on similar principles. They are merely adjusted to the organization of the Church concerned. Thus, general information on the legal status and conditions of the individual churches does not necessarily require the translation of all the decrees.

The above-mentioned publication, Church and State Behind the Iron Curtain, provides general information on the status of the churches in Czechoslovakia. Here it need only be stressed that the title of the laws and decrees, "to provide economic security," looks rather harmless. Their contents and application indicate what churches in return have to surrender to the state for such security. In this regard, the "Background Report" of Radio Free Europe, Czechoslovak unit, of November 15, 1963, is illuminating. It is entitled (in Czechoslovak): Stalinismus v československé cirkevní politice a situaes katolické cirkve po propuštění arcibiskupa dr. Berana (Stalinism in Czechoslovak Church policy and the situation of the Roman Catholic Church following the release of Archibishop Dr. Beran). The report may be summarized as follows:

Having seen that religious sentiments provide a stronger motive for action than Marxism, Stalin abandoned the principle of the separation of church and state as practiced by Lenin and reintroduced the system of caesaropapism, making use of the church for political purposes. As in other Soviet orbit countries, the Czechoslovak ordinaries had to make a choice as to whether to serve in the religious field the aims of the Communist government or the Vatican which was considered to be a power hostile to Czechoslovakia. Since the bishops refused to make such a choice, the Czechoslovak Government enacted the October 1949 laws, the effect of which was absolute economic dependence of the church upon the Government. In addition, the Government Bureau for Church Affairs acquired unlimited authority to remove any priest and to use such authority to fill the position vacated. Bishops and priests who refused to take the oath of allegiance to the people's democratic governmental system were deported or confined. The bishops' general vicars were either jailed or forced to resign. They were replaced by chapter vicars who were willing to cooperate with the Government. This was the fate of Archbishop Dr. Beran, Bishops Dr. Josef Hlouch and Dr. Karel Skoupy. Other "unreliable" bishops were thown into jail and sentenced for long terms. They included Dr. Štěpán Trochta, Ján Vojtaššák, Dr. Pavel Gojdič, Dr. Mořie Pícha, and Dr. Karel Otčenašek. Gojdič died in prison. The Bishop of Mukačevo, Dr. Theodr Romže, was put to death by Soviet authorities. Dr. Gojdič's diocese was abolished. The bishops,
Michal Dr. Stanislav Zela, Dr. [redacted] Buzalka, Dr. Štefan Barnéš, Dr. Vasil Hopko, and Ladislav Hlad, were also sentenced for long terms.

The background report states verbatim:

> We may imagine the catastrophe suffered by the Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia at the hands of Stalinism if we take into consideration that all these Communist actions against the church were followed by broad waves of jailings of priests and Catholic laymen which usually culminated in Stalinist show trials in connection with which drugs were used to break men's spirits and thus achieve greater effect; furthermore, we must take into consideration that the Communist functionaries do not leave in peace those priests either who are tolerated in the church administration and who, if they are not obedient enough, have their permit withdrawn which they require for religious functions; we take into consideration that orders and monasteries have been completely liquidated (the remnants of nuns are doomed to die out), that the last two seminaries, in Litomerice and Bratislava, are subject to Communist indoctrination and, in addition, there is a severe numerus clausus; that inexorable pressure is exerted upon whole categories of citizens, e.g., army officers and teachers, to leave the church; that believing parents must wage an unequal fight against the atheistic school and atheistic organizations for the religion of their children. And because all that was connected with a system of lies, frauds, hatred, corruption, and terror, it is a catastrophe for all the nation without regard to religion. Of course, the brilliant example of people of firm character has excelled all the more as in the case of the Archbishop of Prague, Beran, and a host of additional Czech and Slovak Catholic personalities, priests and laymen, men and women.

Most of the imprisoned bishops and priests have recently been released but their powers have not been restored. From this, and the further fact that some bishops were permitted to attend the 1963 Ecumenical Council in Rome, the report deduces that the Czechoslovak Government is about to come to some rapprochement with the Vatican. In regard to the official acts detailed under items 3 and 4, it must be said that the Government, in order to promote antireligious propaganda, staged several show trials against some bishops and other church dignitaries in 1950 and 1951. These trials were published under such titles as (1) "Trial Against the Traitor-Bishops, Vojtaššák, Buzalka, Gojdič"; (2) "Trial of Vatican Agents in Czechoslovakia";[2] (3) "What Was Hidden Behind the Monastery Walls"; and (4) "Traitors Against Their Own People and Their Own Faithful."

The titles indicate the propaganda designs of the publications. The publication listed in third place contains especially vitriolic propaganda against the Vatican. In its introduction entitled "In the Name of the Vatican Against Their People" it states, among other things, the following:

> The Prague trial of the representatives of the Catholic orders in Czechoslovakia, to some extent, lifted the veil covering the happenings behind the walls of monasteries. The established facts are indicting proof of the criminal activities of the enemy [who is] masking himself with a dignified religious habit. There are facts proving irrevocably that the monasteries were transformed into seats of high treason, that instead of God being worshipped, the alien Vatican is served here, and that instead of prayers being said, weapons are collected here, and also antigovernmental elements sheltered. Instead of strengthening the faith the monasteries disseminated hatred against the [Czechoslovak] Republic and her people.
>
> The Czechoslovak working people * * *, turn away from this crusading international, from this monkish fifth column. With disgust and contempt, the people turn away from the Vatican at the top and our own church hierarchy. The people again, and strongly, convict the Vatican seat, the instigator and organizer of the subversive activities of its orders, as the sworn enemy of mankind, as the obstacle to all progress and the coplotter of the tragic war bloodshed * * *.
>
> The American master and his branch office in Rome, in an endeavor to carry out their common power designs, really do not stop at anything—not even at the

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[2] Available in English translation in "Trial of Vatican Agents in Czechoslovakia (Bishop Zela and Accomplices)." Prague, Orbis, 1951.

> church, faith and fraudulent miracles. Any means are good for them. Therefore, it is necessary to be always on guard.[8]

The churches were denied their independent basis of subsistence in that they were deprived of their landed property under the law of March 21, 1948, No. 46 Coll. and of their property other than land under the laws on nationalization.

Law No. 46/1948 provides inter alia:

> *Sec. 1.* (1) Ownership relations in regard to land (Subsection 7) shall be regulated in such a way that land serving agricultural production shall belong, unless the present law provides otherwise, to farmers farming personally, in accordance with the principle that land shall belong to those who till it.
>
> (2) * * *
>
> (3) The State shall take over, against compensation (Sec. 9(1)), for the same purpose, without regard to acreage (Subs. 2) land (Subs. 7) which is not permanently tilled by the owners in person or which is owned by legal entities other than those specified in Sec. 2 * * *

Concerning land belonging to churches, the law provides in the same subsection as follows:

> Land, the yield of which serves to support clergymen of churches and religious organizations recognized by the State who administer church offices at a lower level (property for [the benefit of] incumbents, property of local congregations, local religious communities and the like), shall be left [to the owner] upon the approval of local peasant commissions in acreage not exceeding thirty hectares.

As to the Church property left, reference is made to Law No. 218/1949 Coll. and Cabinet Decree No. 219/1949 Coll. published in English translation in the work "Church and State Behind the Iron Curtain," referred to above.

In effect now the churches are forced to depend for support upon the government which may, of course, attach any type of condition to the granting of such support.

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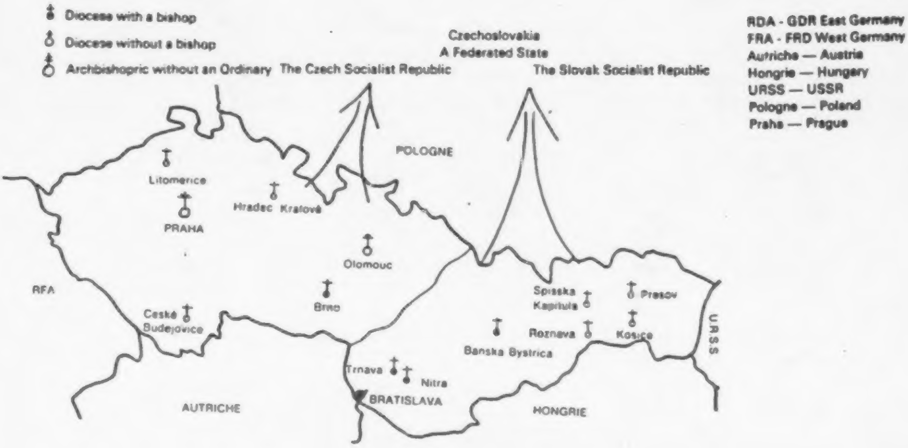
[8] Jindřich Neuls, joint author. "What Was Hidden Behind the Walls of Monasteries" (in Czechoslovak) Prague, Ministerstvo Informací a Osvěty, pp. 7, 8.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA


Diocese with a bishop
Diocese without a bishop
Archbishopric without an Ordinary
Czechoslovakia
A Federated State
The Czech Socialist Republic
The Slovak Socialist Republic
RDA - GDR East Germany
FRA - FRD West Germany
Autriche — Austria
Hongrie — Hungary
URSS — USSR
Pologne — Poland
Praha — Prague
POLOGNE
Litomerice
Hradec Kralové
PRAHA
Olomouc
RFA
Brno
Ceské Budejovice
Spisska Kapitula
Presov
Roznava
Kosice
Banska Bystrica
URSS
Trnava
Nitra
BRATISLAVA
AUTRICHE
HONGRIE

[From the Saturday Evening Post, May 15, 1954]

How I Escaped the Red Trap

(By John Hvasta as told to Milton Lehman)

PART ONE

There's a large, brightly lit room in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia. The room is just off the lavatory of the central police station. The small door to this room is guarded by the STB—the State Secret Police. In this room yesterday and today and tomorrow, someone like me is sitting in a chair, facing the chief interrogator, possibly Laco himself. Behind Laco, who asks the questions, are twenty student interrogators, waiting to slug, slap, kick and curse when the answers do not please them.

I am John Hvasta, an American citizen of Hillside, New Jersey. On the pleasant autumn afternoon of October 16, 1948, I was twenty-one years old and in love with a girl named Gabriela Danis. I was in Gaby's apartment, watching her comb her hair. We'd planned to walk along the Danube to the National Theater—she wanted to hear La Traviata. There was a knock at the back door. Two STB's in leather topcoats asked me to come along to headquarters. They promised I'd be back in half an hour. It was a communist-type half hour—it lasted five years, three months and seventeen days, until our Government forced my release from Czechoslovakia.

With the spotlight in my eyes, I had trouble making out Laco. I had been brought up from a dark dungeon, where I was stripped, prodded, searched and deprived of my belt, shoelaces, necktie, nail file, watch, fountain pen and Navy discharge button. As my eyes got used to the glare, I could see my interrogator—a dapper six-foot young man with dark-rimmed glasses and a bulge on his left chest, where he kept his automatic pistol.

"Mr. John Hvasta," Laco began, staring at me. "Why did you come to Czechoslovakia?"

I told him I came there to go to the University of Bratislava.

"What else, Mr. Hvasta—what else did you come to Czechoslovakia for?"

I was born there in 1927 in the town of Miglesov, and I wanted to see my birthplace again. My father, who works at a brewery in Newark, New Jersey, owned farmland in Slovakia and I planned to sell it for my expenses.

"And what else, Mr. Hvasta—what else?"

What else?

Well, I wanted to see Europe and travel. I came to Czechoslovakia with all the proper papers twenty-five days before the communists took over. I was entitled to be there. They would vouch for me at our Consulate General, where I'd worked as a clerk and interpreter. They all knew me. Let me call the Consulate General.

Behind me, one of Laco's students slapped my head hard from side to side. "You dirty American spy!" he shouted. Another student pulled me out of my chair and threw me to his colleagues, who beat me with fists and open palms, and cursed me. When they finished. I was half kneeling, half lying on the floor. Laco helped me up.

"Now we shall have a nice long talk," he said, his voice getting oily. "Let me assure you, sir, that we know *everything*. It will be useless to conceal anything." He paused. "We know *it*," he said significantly nodding to his students. "Yes, *it* is all revealed to us. *It* is busted."

What was "*it*"? What did they want from me? Why were they hitting me? They first thought up the answers they wanted and then they asked the questions. I didn't know what they wanted.

Again and again I was sent through the whipping line. I gave up trying to defend myself. And then Laco, speaking softly, came to the peak of his questioning, "All right, Mr. Hvasta, now tell us about your trip to Eastern Slovakia. Where did you stop on this trip? Who gave you orders to photograph the underground munitions plant and the military airport? Who was the man in the white cloak who gave you the rolled-up secret papers? Think hard, Mr. Hvasta. Your accomplices have told us *everything*."

A few more trips through the whipping line and I wouldn't be able to think at all. Yes, I took a trip in April to Kosice to attend a relative's wedding. Was that what Laco meant? I came back in a jeep with Robert Dusek, an expert mechanic and friend, his finacée Esther Jersova, and Frank Sporka, a local employee of our United States Consulate General. We came through the Tatra Mountains, where we stopped for the night, had dinner in Lubochna and returned to Bratislava the next day.

"A fine fairy tale," said Laco. "But your accomplices have already confessed. Perhaps they will straighten your thinking."

My friend, Bob Dusek, was brought in and seated before me. He'd been arrested three weeks before and looked terribly frightened. He fidgeted and wiped his glasses and glanced in every direction, but he wouldn't look at me. Under Laco's goading, Bob told a fantastic story. On our trip from Kosice, he said, I gave him orders to stop at an ordnance factory in Povazska Bystrica (I'd never heard of it then, but later I learned that it made weapons for Soviet Russia). He said I stood on the hood of the jeep and made photographs. Then, Bob continued, we went to Dubnica, to a Skoda underground munitions plant. There, he said, I entered an office with Frank Sporka and came out with secret plans. Finally, we stopped at a military airport at Ivanka, where I took more pictures. For this, he said, I received $200.

"Who gave Mr. Hvasta his orders?" Laco prompted him.

Bob stammered that my orders came from Vice Consul Claiborne Pell and Miss McClellan, a secretary at our consulate. I asked Bob to look in my eyes and say these things. Sweating and shaking, Bob looked at me and started to say, "No . . . ."

Laco broke in fast, "Take him out. He needs fresh air."

Then they brought in Frantisek Sporka, a much better actor. Frank was arrested at the same time as I, but had obviously "confessed" at once. He was twenty-four, good-looking, divorced from his first wife, and didn't want his face slapped. During the war, I found out in prison, he had worked for the Nazis. When I met him, he was working for the Americans. Now Frank seemed quite happy to work for the STB. He was very neat, very sure of himself, and he told the same story Bob had recounted. He sat back easily, smoking his cigarette, and said, "Look, John, it's all out now, so you might as well get smart and save your skin."

LEARNING COMMUNISM THE HARD WAY

Before I went to Czechoslovakia—once a republic pattened on our own—all I knew about communism was what I wrote for a term paper at Upsala College, in East Orange, New Jersey. But under Laco's spotlight, I began an education beyond anything I could have learned in school. It led me through the whole tragedy of communism, under which half the world lives today. If I was too young at twenty-one to realize what lay ahead of me, I have now paid for that rashness. Today I feel much too old at twenty-six.

Now, I think first of my wife, Gaby, sick with tuberculosis and refused an exit permit from Czechoslovakia. (I would do nothing to endanger her. I would rather trust in God that she will survive these years or even be released to me as my American wife by the communists. I would not want to risk an underground effort to free her which might fail and mean her death. Perhaps our Government can help.)

I think of Dusek and Sporka slaving in the Jachymov uranium mines, affected by radiation, the once lively Dusek, and Sporka, who was once so sure he could work his way into communist graces. I think of The Joker, who liked to pound my bare feet with a rubber hose, but couldn't make me "confess" to a crime that never happened.

I remember my trial and the People's Judge, asleep at the bench and snoring; Michalik, the brutal commandant at Leopoldov Penitentiary, and my fellow political prisoner—bishops and students, professors and generals, and enough ministers to fill several Czechoslovak cabinets. I remember our escape—more than three years after my arrest—through the wall of Leopoldov, running nights and days, losing my friends going on alone, and knocking at doors which opened to me as "Johnny, the American."

I think back on these five years to places and people—to Milan, the constable; to Jaraj, the forester; to Michal, the laborer (which are not their names, but the names I use now for those who helped me at the risk of their lives); to my huts in the woods where I lived, ate and slept like a wild animal; to the birds I tamed and the field mice I caught in a homemade trap for the pleasure of seeing them escape. I remember the moment I got to our embassy in Prague, the same moment a communist police guard at the gate crossed the street to talk to a comrade; and my return to the United States, the parade for me in Hillside, and questions that followed, whose answers I set down here, taking extreme care to protect all those who protected me for so many months. The STB would like to know who they are. For in Czechoslovakia today, as a fellow inmate at Leopoldov once told me: "Here we are either prisoners, former prisoners or about-to-become prisoners."

In the Bratislava police station, I learned that I was a prisoner. After seeing Bob Dusek break down and Sporka gamble on pleasing a new master, I was led back to my basement cell under the large room. The keyman opened the door to Cell No. 6, which was ten feet by six, and furnished with an iron cot and a tired old straw mattress, which was leaking straw. There were no blankets on the mattress; only sweat and dirt stains from prisoners before me. The cell also had a toilet bowl and a table containing a pitcher of lukewarm water.

But the first thing I saw was the cross, scratched deep into the plaster walls by the fingernails of a previous tenant. I am a Greek Catholic, raised by devout parents, who believe that God, Jesus and Mother Mary will care for those who ask. Directly under the cross were verses scratched in Slovak by another prisoner. My Slovak wasn't too good, but I memorized the inscription: *"Smrti sa nebojim, smrt neni zla, smrt je len kusok tazkeho zivota."* It meant:

I am not afraid of Death,
Death is not evil,
Death is only part
Of a hard life.

Kneeling under the cross, I prayed for enlightenment as my mother taught me to do when some problem puzzled me. I felt consoled and less disturbed. The heat and foul smell in my cell were stifling. In the next cell a prisoner was tapping on the wall in Morse code. Some of my Navy training came back—I'd served on the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Hornet, which spent its time in 1946 cruising in San Francisco harbor. I made out the letters: ". . . kto si . . .," figuring that someone was asking who I was in Slovak. Cautious, I tapped back V for Victor. Later, I found that my neighbor was a girl and pretty. I saw her one morning, washing her blouse.

In my cell I thought of the events that led me here. My father was a farmer who came to the United States after World War I and later brought us here from Slovakia in the early days of Hitler. I was eleven at the time. After public and high school in Newark, I joined the Navy. After my discharge I went to Upsala College. But I felt restless and in January, 1948, I decided to go to Europe. I stayed in Paris a couple days, took the Orient Express to Prague, went on the Bratislava and registered at the university. Before my classes started, I spent two weeks in Miglesov, the small, main-street village where I was born. In Miglesov, the old farmhouse, fields and streams were a lot smaller than I remembered.

I was very young then, and not very wise. Back at the university, I enrolled for classed in philosophy, psychology, history, Russian and German. Around this time Gottwald and his communists took over the country. Some of my fellow students and professors were marched off to jail. I didn't think they could hurt an American, although four of us Americans at school were being tailed by the STB. I took a job as interpreter at our new Consulate General and I joined my dormitory's basketball team.

One evening while waiting for a bus to basketball practice, I met Bob Dusek, a Slovak who learned his English from the American Army in Pilsen and owned a surplus American jeep. Bob was about thirty years old, and he became my best friend. Through him, I met Gabriela Danis, a nineteen-year-old girl who lived with her widowed mother.

I remembered Gaby as she looked that first afternoon in March. She was wearing a loose dark skirt and a light sweater. She wore no make-up, but she had a brilliant smile and a beautiful figure. She said she had relatives in Pennsylvania.

I said, "You know, Gaby, it's too nice a day for a strange fellow to spend by himself. Wouldn't you like to come along with us?"

Later, Gaby told me I'd seemed like a little boy and she hadn't minded me calling her by her first name. That spring and summer we went around together, seeing the country, and falling in love. She taught me Slovak and I taught her English. We swam in the Danube and went dancing and got engaged. In the fall I went to Austria to visit a cousin who was a first lieutenant in the American occupation forces. While there, I telephoned Gaby, who was in Bratislava. She told me that Bob Dusek had been arrested. I felt I had nothing to fear. I brought her back a suitcase of clothes, chocolate bars, chewing gum, lipstick, perfume and two pairs of nylons from the post exchange.

Gaby was waiting for me. "Let's go away from here, Johnny," she said.

Gaby seemed uneasy, so I told her, "All right, darling; we'll go soon. We'll get you a passport and then go home to the United States and get married." Ten days later, I was arrested.

Ten hours a day for thirty-two days, I was taken to the large room and questioned, beaten, punched and kicked. Many others broke down and "confessed" under no worse abuse. I'm still not sure what kept me from telling Laco and his students what they wanted to hear. I knew they were out to discredit our consulate. Vice Consul Pell, a Princeton graduate, had stood up to the new government, insisting strongly on American diplomatic rights. He was heartily hated by the communists and they wanted to be rid of him. Maybe I decided that I could be just as stubborn as Pell. A second reason I refused to "confess" was that I would merely implicate other innocent people and do nothing to help myself. Third, I believed—until the end of my first year in prison—that the communists couldn't treat an American in this manner, that our consulate would obtain my freedom. Finally, I knew how to pray and felt sure that God would somehow preserve me.

After a few days with Laco, I was passed down to a short, dark STB captain for further processing. The captain, a recently promoted student, was determined to make good. He worked me over in a small, dismal room with the help of a long, hairy-armed guard whom I called The Joker; a grim-looking interpreter; a pistol-packing tough; and a homely, red-headed typist who knitted on a baby sweater between times. The captain tried to exhaust me into confession. He had me do endless calisthenics while he counted the numbers. He made me repeat my account of the wedding trip a hundred times, while his assistants used their fists. He put pencils between my fingers, breaking the pencils with a crushing handshake.

The captain very nearly succeeded. One afternoon he ordered me to kneel on a chair while The Joker beat the soles of my feet with a rubber hose. I screamed with pain.

"All right!" shouted the captain. "Who was the man in the white cloak who gave you the secret papers?" The Joker kept beating and the captain shouting until finally I blurted out. "Robert Taylor." With this first "admission," the captain and his crew were as happy as children. They sent me back to my cell, sure. I would tell everything. But with time to think and pray I decided to hold to the truth. Next morning I told them that Robert Taylor was an American movie star, that there never was a "man in the white cloak," that I had no confession to sign.

Now the captain was beside himself and I was mistreated in an inhuman manner. At two o'clock the following morning he was at my cell muttering, "Come along, Hvasta; this is it!"

With three escorts and a gun in my side, I was taken, blindfolded, out to a parked car. We drove for a half hour and stopped. I could hear the Danube flowing below us. I was led into something, turned right, then left, then right again. My blindfold was removed and I found myself in a cave, lighted by a tar torch. I watched the bats fly out of the cave.

The captain said, "Now, Mr. Hvasta, either you sign a confession like Dusek and Sporka or you won't see daylight again."

Today I know that the cave treatment was totally staged. But at the time, I was sure I would die. I knelt and began to pray. The captain aimed his gun at my forehead and someone put out the torch. The captain fired and I heard the bullet whiz past my left ear and ricochet in the rocks. I fell to the ground, thinking I must be killed. Then I heard the captain bellow that someone had bumped his arm, causing him to miss. An older guard said softly that he had a son like me and thought I should have another chance. I still refused to talk and, after another hour of beating, they brought me back to prison.

In November, Bob Dusek, Frank Sporka and I were carted off to Bratislava's Palace of Justice in a "Green Anthony" police van. I still refused to sign a confession, although I did sign a fourteen-page deposition to avoid unnecessary torture. The deposition was written in vague language, but I read it carefully and felt they couldn't use it against me. The confessions of Dusek and Sporka ran more than 100 pages each. In the police van I saw them for the first time since our meeting with Laco. Bob, with tears in his eyes, said, "I'm sorry, John." I told him I understood. Sporka mumbled something, but I wasn't much interested.

The Palace of Justice, housing the gloomy courts and the gloomier State Court Prison, makes for salty comments by prisoners who find no justice in the place. Here in the prison I lived for six months, awaiting my trial, and began making friends. The prison grapevine was electrified that an American was here, and the old warden allowed me privileges—a few food packages, a letter every week and even visits from Gaby. From long experience, the warden knew that today's prisoner may be tomorrow's prime minister. A few weeks after my arrival, though, he was replaced by Political Commissar Augustin Michalik, a brutal lackey of the communists, who hounded me the rest of my days in prison.

Meanwhile, Gaby was trying to find a good attorney to argue the case of Hvasta, Dusek and Sporka. The first lawyer she hired withdrew fast—on advice of the Chamber of Attorneys, the rough equivalent of our American Bar Association. The second, a scholarly gentleman, also withdrew, but first he came to visit me in prison. He said my case looked "very good," that I was sure to be expelled from the country. Finally, Gaby settled on a young lawyer, but I didn't see him until two days before the trial.

Feeling hopeful again, I applied to the Czechoslovak authorities for permission to marry Gaby, and I sent word to our Consulate General. Under old Czechoslovak law, a wife acquires her husband's citizenship by marriage, which might have allowed Gaby to leave with me. I felt even more hopeful when the authorities approved our marriage. I don't know today why they approved, except that I was then being badgered to "confess" my "guilt" by an examining magistrate. Perhaps he thought I would be grateful and more co-operative.

The nuptials were held in a small prison room on February 4, 1949. Thanks to Commissar Michalik, I hadn't seen Gaby for two months. She seemed a little sickly on her last visit, but I wasn't prepared for her now. She had tuberculosis and had lost twenty-five pounds. Later I found out that she'd been arrested and imprisoned for three weeks and then released. The ceremony was brief, we accepted our vows, signed our names and kissed.

"Johnny," she said, "my life is with you—and for you. Remember that and—believe me—no matter what happens."

While I stood there, Gaby was taken out of the room. Then I was led back to my cell.

I saw her next at the trial. The young attorney was sure I'd be acquitted, and Dusek and Sporka, too; they'd both pleaded innocent, denying their earlier "confessions." The trial was conducted secretly, with no public and no reporters allowed. Only for the reading of the indictment and verdict were Vice Consul Robert Bailey, who succeeded Mr. Pell; my wife, Gaby; and Dusek's relatives allowed in the courtroom.

The trial was a total farce. How do you say that and still sound objective? It wasn't an objective thing, it was something from Alice in Wonderland. There was no evidence. As my "espionage camera" they displayed a ninety-nine-cent box camera they'd found in my room. A prosecution witness spoke of a "closed sedan with American license plates"—we had an open jeep with a Czechoslovak license. The prosecutor set the date of the "crime" in May—we came back from the wedding in April.

But the Senate of Judges, led by foxy, balding Dr. Vaclav Hamak, worked in a cheerful spirit of "off with their heads." Doctor Hamak seemed disturbed only once during the trial—when one of the communists' own People's Judges went to sleep and snored so loudly we couldn't hear the prosecutor. He jabbed his fellow judge in the ribs hard.

"What did you do when you stopped at the factory?" Doctor Hamak asked me.

"I didn't stop at a factory," I said.

"But you confessed and told about Robert Taylor," he said seriously.

I expained who Taylor was, and said I simply couldn't stand the beatings. Doctor Hamak roared that my remarks be deleted.

During recess Gaby came to me with sandwiches. She was awfully thin and the dark dress she wore made her look thinner. I tried to tell her it would be all right.

For the fiftieth time, Doctor Hamak asked if I still pleaded not guilty. He told me that Sporka and Dusek had confessed.

"Do you call that a confession?" I shouted. "They both denied it and I never confessed at all!"

Doctor Hamak got boiling mad and roared at me, "Order in the court!" At that moment, I noticed that my attorney, sitting behind me, wasn't saying a word.

Two hours later they gave their verdict, sentencing us each to three years in prison and confiscating all our property. I could hear Gaby sobbing.

"Do you, John Hvasta, accept the verdict?" asked Doctor Hamak.

"Of course not! This isn't justice!" I shouted. "I demand an appeal!"

My colleagues Dusek and Sporka also appealed. It didn't get us very far.

From the Palace of Justice, we were taken to the Leopoldov Penitentiary, fifty miles away, on June 13, 1949. Leopoldov—a star-shaped seventeenth-century fortress—is considered an escape-proof prison. Its walls are forty feet thick at the base, and fifty feet high, and patrolled by machine gunners. To add to these difficulties, Commissar Michalik had become chief warden there. The first night I was assigned to Cell 52, which contained a former prime minister of Slovakia, a former minister of education, a priest and a doctor. Of Leopoldov's 1200 prisoners, 90 per cent were "political," and included the intellectual and spiritual leaders of the country.

My "host" in Cell 52 was a former premier of Slovakia, who welcomed me warmly as an American. "Johnny," he said, in careful English, "in the name of all us prisoners, I welcome you to our humble quarters. It is true we never expected such an honored guest. But since you are here, be welcome. Perhaps you will teach us better English." From that day on, I became "Johnny, the American" in Leopoldov.

I never expected to become a professor of English, or American, when I came through the gates of Leopoldov. But here each of us gave to the others whatever he had to offer. I taught them English in our cells and our workshops and I taught them such songs as you are My Sunshine, My Darling Clementine and The Star-Spangled Banner. We translated our national anthem into Slovak and some of my new friends dared to sing it during an indoctrination course. They were shipped to solitary as a result.

The prisoner priests at Leopoldov, I think, had most to give, and gave most generously. Although Commissar Michalik banned religion from the premises, these brave priests dared to conduct confession as we took our daily walk through the prison yard. They conducted Mass clandestinely, leaving the consecrated host on a table for the worshiper to partake. Some of them had their prison sentences increased by five years for performing such rites.

My first prison assignment was to the basket-weaving shop, where we made wicker containers for liquor demijohns. My instructor was a fellow inmate—Dr. Aladar Kocis, the former minister of education in Slovakia. After several months in this shop, I was transferred to the paper-sack factory, a large open room that got so cold we risked burning up sacks to get some heat. Commissar Michalik had his eye on me as a "hated American spy," and when he learned that I was teaching English speech and American ways to my fellow prisoners, he reported to his superiors and I was ordered off to Jachymov, the uranium mines, together with Bob Dusek and Frank Sporka.

Before leaving Leopoldov, I tried to get word to our consul general, Winthrop S. Greene, in Bratislava. A warm, kindly man, our consul general as well as every prisoner knew Jachymov as the Siberia of Czechoslovakia. But Mr. Greene didn't hear of my sudden departure in time. We were shipped out by cattle car and got to the mines that night. At Jachymov, political prisoners mined uranium under Soviet Russian supervision. The Russians wanted their *"rudenka"* and didn't care for the health of the miners, who were developing severe radiation ulcers. The physicians at Jachymov were powerless to help them. Jachymov was run as a concentration camp and the guards there carried submachine guns and blustered about shooting you down for the most minor infraction. One trigger-happy guard set off a riot which ended with twenty prisoners killed.

My stay at Jachymov was amazingly short. After twenty-four hours, I was suddenly surrounded by fifteen guards, unpleasantly armed with submachine guns, who promptly brought me back to Leopoldov. Why this happened to me I still don't know. Probably some communist had fouled up my orders. Possibly the communists felt that I was already an embarassing case and didn't want more trouble with the United States by sending me to their uranium slave camp. Soon after my return, Greene managed to visit with me. Ignoring Michalik's deputy, who stood by, I told the consul general the whole story—the fantastic charges, the weird secret trial and the commissar's petty persecutions. After the consul general left, Michalik got his revenge—he ordered me into solitary confinement for the balance of my three-year sentence.

After a month of solitary, I got desperate. I threatened to cut my wrists, since the communists were afraid of suicides, fearing very strong reactions from the outside world. I remembered an epileptic prisoner and thought of copying his seizure. Finally, one day during a walk in the snow-covered yard, I pulled a faint, falling limp and getting carried back to my cell. Earlier, I had drunk some black-water "coffee" with tobacco in it and worked up a temperature. A friendly doctor certified that I was quite sick, but all this had no effect. One month later, after threatening to slash my wrists, I was brought out of solitary and sent to work in the prison's clerical office. There I was assigned to turn out material on a crude copying machine. In order to get food packages or possibly a visit from Gaby, I had to exceed the communist norm of production. Whenever I did, though, Michalik simply increased the norm. Finally I exceeded the original norm by some 800 percent, which was still not enough for the commissar.

In April 1950, my appeal to the Supreme Court of Czechoslovakia finally came up for hearing and I was taken to the Supreme Court in Prague. In the railroad stations en route, I displayed my manacles to the crowds. People who saw me spat in disgust at the guards. My appeal took less than a day. After a hearing so brief it left me speechless, the court adjourned. Ten minutes later the judges returned with their findings—a neatly typed eight-page document, obvidously prepared in advance—which increased my sentence from three to ten years. I was sent back to Leopoldov with seven more years to serve. Wiser prisoners of the communists, I know today, should never appeal their sentences.

Just before Christmas, 1951, Commissar Michalik sorted out his inmates. As we heard it, the idea was to move the important political prisoners to a segregated area of Leopoldov to bring them under better control. Or maybe it was just a routine prison maneuver to keep the inmates off balance. When I left our common cell, Jurko, an attorney who possibly wasn't considered "important," was left behind. He said in parting, "God bless you and help you wherever you go." As Jurko heard it, our transfer would provide worse, not better, conditions.

One hundred of us were routed out of our cells and lined up for the shift, among them Jan Ursiny, the former vice-premier of Czechoslovakia; Vladimir Bodicky, former general of the police; Tiso, the former prime minister of Slovakia; Sano Mach, the former minister of interior for Slovakia; and former generals, directors of banks, mayors, bishops, engineers, professors, students, farmers and factory workers.

Waiting in columns of fours, we were given an extra ration of cooked farina—we called it "pohadka mladi," which means "mystery of youth." As we marched downstairs, the public-address system blared out a communist marching song—the same song we'd heard a few days before, when a voice shouted, "Help, help, they're going to kill me!" and the song blotted it out.

During this march I met Pravosh Raichl, a former first lieutenant in the Czechoslovak army, who had heard of me—the grapevine was working again. We became close friends in a very short time. Our new chief guard, a tough guy with the bearing of an orangutan, heard us talking. He came up with his fists clenched, strutting his authority.

"All right, you two," he said. "Solitary and half rations for a month."

"That's too severe," I said.

"We didn't do anything wrong," said Raichl.

The ape man hit Raichl. Raichl, I figured, had had it. He was slyly reaching for another guard's Tommy gun when the ape man was called away.

"Take it easy, Pravosh," I told him.

"All right, Johnny," he said. "But we're going to get out of this place. I don't know how, but we're going to get out of here."

[EDITORS' NOTE.—This is the first of three articles by Mr. Hvasta. The second, in which he tells how he broke through a fifty-foot prison wall to become a fugitive behind the Iron Curtain, will appear next week.]

[From the Saturday Evening Post, May 22, 1954]

How I Escaped the Red Trap

(By John Hvasta as told to Milton Lehman)

(Deep in the Leopoldov prison, behind fifty-foot walls, Johnny the American nearly gave up hope of freedom. Then a daring fellow prisoner conceived a plan—and they broke out to become fugitives behind the Iron Curtain.)

PART TWO

The walls of Jericho came down at the blast of trumpets. The walls of Leopoldov State Penitentiary in communist Czechoslovakia are much tougher. They are forty feet thick at the base and fifty feet high. They are posted with STB guards in dull red uniforms—members of the secret police—who march the top of the wall with submachine guns. A third of the way down the outside of the wall is an electrified wire with enough voltage to kill. It was put there after the first escape from the prison in April, 1948, when two men scaled the wall, fastened a rope from the top and climed down to freedom. The various gates of Leopoldov are now guarded with terrific care. One night in May, 1949, a month before I entered Leopoldov, three men escaped, one of them a guard, by walking out with a faked pass to the hospital outside the grounds. All three made their way to Vienna, in the American sector.

By Christmas week, 1951, Leopoldov was a very hard place to get out of. There were, as far as I knew, only two holes in the wall of this old prison, which was originally built in the shape of a huge six-pointed star as a fortress against the Turks in 1665. One hole was called the *kazamat,* or dungeon. I never saw inside it, but I wasn't too sure that I wouldn't. *Kazamat* was a place where prisoners—when I was in Leopoldov most of us were political prisoners—were sent in heavy chains for special punishment. In *kazamat,* water dripped from the walls, the mice and rats were always hungry, you wore the chains on your arms and legs and the guards were brutal. Here, they even used one prisoner named Siska, a convicted murderer, to beat up his fellow prisoners. But the hole to *kazamat* ended against solid rock and not even a rat could work his way out.

There was another hole in the wall, however. It was built in the first days of Leopoldov as the entrance to the drawbridge. On the day we found this hole, the drawbridge was long since gone. Our job as prisoners on the work detail was to break down the entrance to the tunnel, seal it permanently and also demolish a number of very old outbuildings near the wall. Commissar Augustin Michalik, the ambitious prison warden, was out to make Leopoldov completely escape-proof. He wanted to make a good record with his bosees. So he ordered that all obstructions and weaknesses in the walls be removed, sealed or pounded down. From this tunnel, I escaped, January 2, 1952, with five other prisoners.

I was an American student at the University of Bratislava when I was sent to Leopoldov to serve three years. My sentence was later increased to ten, when I appealed. I was convicted of espionage, or what the communists called "military treason." I was innocent. The communist president, Gottwald—as well as our Consulate General, our Embassy, our State Department, the Czechoslovak Foreign Office, three Czechoslovak lawyers, five judges who sat at my trial, and my wife, Gaby—knew I was totally innocent.

At the time of my escape I was twenty-four years old. Until Christmas, 1951—my fourth in prison—I'd believed that someone, perhaps our Government, would obtain my release. Now I felt that my freedom depended upon faith and myself and I prayed that God would somehow help. I remembered my mother back in Hillside, New Jersey, talking with me when I was troubled, and the phrase: "Ask and it shall be given, seek and you shall find, knock and it will be opened."

Then I thought back to my keepers, still wondering why they had thrown me in prison and tortured me. I knew the communists were determined to discredit our Consulate General in Bratislava, one of the easternmost diplomatic contacts between the free world and the Soviet. Today that Consulate General is out of business. Before it closed its doors, United States vice-consuls, the consul general, and even our Secretary of State tried to make sense with the communists about the John Hvasta case and obtain my freedom. Somehow, the communists refused to understand what our people were talking about.

In all prisons, I found, there are three kinds of inmates. First are the resigned ones, who sit and wait for an amnesty; second are the thoughtful ones, who cautiously consider escape; third are the daring, who will make a break given the slightest chance. My friend, Pravosh Raichl, was one of the daring. Although he was only thirty, he had lived incredibly. Twice he had been sentenced to death and then commuted to life imprisonment. On the Russian front during the war, he was captured as a Czechoslovak infantry lieutenant forced to fight in the German Army. He was fifteen minutes from the firing squad when his life was spared. His second sentence of death come in 1948, when the communists took over Czechoslovakia. He was charged with conspiracy to overthrow the government. He was a born patriot and I never doubted the charge.

Pravosh was a handsome, blond and honorable Czech, whose eyes had that peculiar cast you find in men who have seen the shadow of death and faced it down. He was totally fearless. When the "bad" guards—we made a distinction between them—tried to oppress him, he was tough and belligerent. Otherwise he was kindly. I felt at once that I could trust him all the way.

I met Raichl through Gervais Garcette, a middle-aged, spirited Frenchman suffering from gallstones, sentenced to twenty-five years for espionage. Garcette's great offense was belonging to the French Repatriation Committee in Prague after the war. Raichl, Garcette and I were lined up to go to work, marching to the garages where the tools were kept. A tough corporal of the guard had tried to browbeat us, and Raichl had stood up to him.

When the guard went away, Raichl said, "Look, Johnny, we're going to get out of here."

Today, I know, Raichl was a man who couldn't be kept in prison. The only way you could prevent his escape would be to shoot him.

When we got to the garage, Raichl had another idea. "Hey, Johnny," he said, "let's not take a pick or shovel. We'll get a wheelbarrow. That way we can move around and look over the walls."

A couple of days later I came to Raichl's work station looking for a crowbar. Raichl said tensely, "The only way out of here, Johnny, is to jump. Let's try it."

I thought of the slight distance of fifty feet and the high-tension wire. "Let's wait for something better," I said.

I spent the next few days through Christmas in my cell and on the work detail. In my two-man cell, No. 174, my bunkmate was Major Iskra, a fifteen-year prisoner and a retired ordnance officer of the Czechoslovak Army, whom I tried to teach English. The major was past sixty and gasped as he lifted the heavy rocks. At night, he snored terribly, waking me up, but I still liked him. His English pronunciation was fantastic, although he was trying hard. On Christmas Eve we shared a few apples and nuts. A "good" guard produced an accordion on the floor below and played carols until the warden silenced him.

At midnight I said, "Merry Christmas, major," and he said back to me, "Johnny, in Noo Joorsey soon I hope you be."

On December twenty-seventh, Pravosh Raichl and I worked together on the same wrecking crew, which also included Garcette, a paratrooper general, a hulking village constable, a stooped and aged bishop and a professor of philosophy. Some twenty-five of us were sent to the top of the tunnel entrance jutting out from the wall, which we sometimes used as a latrine.

While we were working, Raichl asked, "Johnny, do you know of any place?"

Almost without thinking, I said, "Take a look below."

Pravosh went below to the tunnel, whose entrance was already being filled with rocks and stones we were knocking down from the top. He came up a few minutes later.

"Johnny, Johnny!" he shouted, or maybe his voice just sounded loud to me.

"Quiet, Prav!" I said, noticing the guards some twenty yards away.

But Pravosh was very excited and wanted to talk. He'd found two prisoners inside the tunnel, digging an escape hole. They were frightened when Raichl discovered them, but he convinced them that they were safe. They told him they were hoping to burrow through to the outside and escape. Raichl said they would have company.

The two prisoners were Stefan Gavenda and Jaroslav Bures. Both had been sentenced to death for espionage. Together they had worked as agents for the Western powers against the communist state. Gavenda was a husky blond with the general looks of a Burt Lancaster. He was about twenty-seven years old, a former student of electricity and rather quiet. He had already served two and a half years at Leopoldov and was still awaiting the hearing of his appeal for clemency. He had a strange smile, as if he were keeping many things to himself.

Gavenda's friend, Bures, was a twenty-nine-year-old Czech newspaperman, whose death sentence was already commuted to life. He was mild-mannered, wore glasses and came from a working-class family in Prague. He had a hard handshake, and when I met him, he looked at me with great confidence and said, "Don't you worry, Johnny; we'll make it."

Before Raichl left them that first afternoon, Gavenda said, "You've got to go up there and stop the 'miglanc!'—'big lug.' He's going to smash this tunnel down on our heads."

None of us prisoners was so eager for work as the "big lug." He was a former cop, and had been convicted of conspiracy to overthrow the government. His death sentence had been communted to life imprisonment. We called him "Ten Obor," or "The Giant." He weighed 250 pounds at least, was well over six feet tall, and was a very handy man with a sledge hammer. Given one, he had to use it—and whenever he swung, things flew apart. For us, it was a big job to slow him down.

Every day one of us would go to him and say, "What's your hurry, Obor?" Or, "You've got your whole life to finish this job." Or, "Obor, why don't you save your strength? Here, have some chocolates. Here, have a good cigarette." But after each attempt we made to stall him, Obor got back to his smashing.

How is an escape planned? Our conspiracy to escape was planned in silence. On the morning of December twenty-eighth, we broke up into two teams, Raichl working with me, Gavenda and Bures working together. Gavenda and Bures did most of the digging, clawing away with their fingers, concealing the boulders and bricks nearby. While Raichl stood guard, I piled debris in the tunnel's entrance to block the view. After an hour, we changed jobs.

"Gavenda," Raichl said, "your hands are bleeding. We'll take it now."

I went into the tunnel to take over from Gavenda. The tunnel went twenty-five feet into the forty-foot wall, and then began the hole Gavenda had started—twelve by fifteen inches, enough for a human body to get through. I began clawing away as fast as I could, while Raichl waited near the mouth of the tunnel with a crow-bar in case we were disturbed. Above me I could hear Obor, the village constable, smashing away with his sledge hammer.

How do you choose the time? The next morning, Saturday, Raichl said, "Come on, Johnny; let's try it today."

I said, "All right," but I didn't feel good about it. I don't exactly know why—maybe it would have worked that day. But I kept thinking of the old prison guards, who know their way around, and finally I said to Raichl, "No, let's wait."

That day Gavenda brought us a small iron bar to wedge out the boulders. While we were working on top of the tunnel, a prisoner came up to Raichl. He was Josef Hermansky, a young high-school boy who had majored in chemistry. He had a bad cold at the time and was coughing. "Let me in on it," he said.

A little later, Josef Chalupa, a six-foot, husky, twenty-nine-year-old policeman from Moravia, came up to Bures and asked, "Can I come along?"

Now we were six. For a moment I thought of turning our escape gamble into a general prison break, giving some 350 political prisoners a chance to get out. However, we figured this was too risky, since most of the prisoners would end up on the gallows if we failed.

Of the six of us, I felt I had the best chance—if we were captured, I'd only be sentenced to life. The others would probably be executed. Therefore, I became leader of our group, taking full responsibility in case of capture.

On Sunday, December thirtieth, and Monday, New Year's Eve, we were locked in our cells. Downstairs, the guards were carousing and celebrating the holiday, leaving our lights on all night for security. At midnight we thumped on the walls, some sending V for Victory in Morse code, others beating out almost a savage rhythm, still others shouting, "*Stastlivy Novy Rok!*"—"Happy New Year." By that time the guards were too happy downstairs to hear us.

My own thoughts were echoing of Gaby, my wife. She was in the t.b. contagious ward of the general hospital in Bratislava. The last time I'd seen her was eight months before, when we'd sat with a steel screen between us and a guard standing by with his note pad. Once she was healthy and beautifully young, but now she was gaunt, pale and obviously quite sick, and she spoke to me with pain in her voice. Later, I learned that she's been imprisoned, tortured and interrogated many times about my "espionage." Her own pain and suffering she never told me. I remember her saying, "Don't ever lose hope, Johnny. Because then—there's nothing for me either." On this New Year's Eve I prayed for her and for myself and for the chance ahead.

On New Year's Day we lined up for showers, shaves and haircuts. I avoided a haircut, not wanting to attract attention with a prison-shaved head if I got out of Leopoldov. My five friends, though, got the usual one-eighth-inch treatment. Leaving the barbershop, we decided we'd better make our break the next day. Raichl said, "Thanks to that *Obor*, the tunnel's going to fall on us if we don't hurry." I agreed. That night I hoped for our success and slept soundly.

On the morning of January second, I ate as much as possible. I did knee bends in my cell, trying to get my legs in condition. In the afternoon when we lined up for work, Raichl asked how I felt. I said, "Fine, Prav. I think it'll be good today." On the way back to work, the six of us kept close together. I had the idea of wetting the soles of our shoes so we wouldn't leave traces for the bloodhounds. I waded in puddles, soaking my shoes, and the others did, too, like in a game of follow-the-leader.

Some fifty yards from the tunnel we passed an old guard in a ragged coat who was chopping wood. Then we turned the corner and three of us rushed for the tunnel. A guard yelled, "Hey, where are you going?" We said we were going to the toilet. We went into the tunnel while Raichl, Chalupa and Bures waited outside, ready to give a warning sign. I held a crowbar cocked near the opening, hoping I wouldn't have to use it. We now had a foot of brick and stone to remove.

Stefan Gavenda began clearing stones until his hands bled, and then borrowed the crowbar. We changed places, while Bures stood guard at the entrance. Meanwhile, Raichl and Chalupa, on top, were stalling off *Obor* and his sledge hammer. At about two o'clock, after lunch, the giant let go a terrific blow that showered rubble on me.

I cried out to Bures, "Listen, Jarda, do something! Throw a rock on his foot or he'll cave us in!"

Raichl took some Christmas chocolate I'd secretly saved to *Obor* and that slowed him down. About 3:30 we could tell the hole was almost through. Gavenda said, "Here, give me the crowbar. I started this and I want to finish it." He did. And, God, how good the light from outside looked! We quickly covered the hole with Gavenda's blanket, so the guards couldn't see the light.

Raichl came into the cave just before quitting time at four o'clock. "What are you doing, Johnny—praying?" Hermansky asked me. I nodded. And then we waited for the sound of "*padla*," a Slovak word from the mason's trade which means "fall." In old Czechoslovakia, at quitting time, even a mason with a brick in his hand would let it fall.

Just before *padla* we checked our carefully hoarded food supply. Gavenda had brought some bread; Raichl, bread and sugar; Hermansky, bread and a chocolate bar. I had a pound of bread, some vitamin-C pills, a little tobacco and a few pods of dried paprika. Chalupa, the former policeman, had some vitamin-B pills. Bures had only bread. Since I was taking charge, I evened out the food supply, giving each of us enough for an average prison meal.

The minutes dragged and we wanted them to fly. Maybe we'd all end up shot by the guards, but we wanted it over quick, whatever happened. After a few minutes, the sound of *padla* went through the entire prison compound, and we made our escape.

Gavenda, and then Raichl, squeezed out, headfirst, although I'd warned against it. The drop on the other side was greater than they figured, and each of them broke his nose. Hermansky agreed with me and went feet first. I stooped down, Hermansky braced himself on my shoulders, and then shoved out. Then I did the same with Chalupa. Meanwhile, Gavenda, Raichl and Hermansky were already running across the open field.

I followed them, Chalupa came after me, and then Bures. About fifty feet from the prison wall there was a ditch about three feet wide and deep. I wasn't so strong as I thought, and I fell into the ditch, scraping myself and spraining my left thigh muscle. It didn't hurt much at the time. While I was trying to scramble out of the ditch, Chalupa and Bures passed me, running toward the railroad tracks. I ran after them, expecting any minute to hear machine-gun fire, and gasping, "Holy Mary, have mercy on us!"

As I ran, my mind raced faster than my legs. It was something like being born again and hurrying to catch up with the missing years. It was man finding a way out when the pressure builds up, man reaching out to light as a plant does, as a bird flies. All my life I have believed in God as a way of life. And now I felt that He was giving me life itself.

And then I thought back to my hunch about this escape—that we would succeed. I remembered how Raichl and I had figured the time beginning at *padla*, judging that at most we would have only eighteen minutes before the alarm went out.

After *padla*, it would take seven minutes before the main body would come to join our working party of twenty-three. It would take three more minutes to march on to the last working position, another two to form up the prisoners, another to count them, and still another to check and count their tools. That would be fourteen minutes—if we were lucky. Then Pepo, the one-eyed prison foreman, would count his prisoners again. At the fifteenth minute, Pepo would suspect that six were missing. He'd make a careful recheck. At sixteen minutes, Pepo would report to the commander of the day, and two minutes later the alarm would go out. That, we guessed, would be the very best we could hope for.

At 4:18 p.m. on January second—eighteen minutes after our escape—we were running across a railroad bridge over the river Vah when we heard machine guns shooting. I looked back and remembered Lot's wife looking back on the burning city. On the wall the guards were firing their machine guns into space, but we were already out of range.

When we crossed the bridge, there was an old man on the other side, who stopped and crossed himself.

"Pop, don't you dare say anyting!" Gavenda shouted.

He just waved and said, "Go on, boys, as fast as you can. Go on so they won't catch you." I felt good to know that people were on our side. I kept running, but my chest was bursting with pain and I began to feel worse pain in my sprained leg.

Beyond the bridge, the first village we reached was Zabrodske—which isn't its name, nor are any villages, towns, cities or people given their real names in the account that follows.

I was breathing pretty hard when we came to the the small village and I said, "Look, fellows, we'd better split up now. . . . Raichl, did you make arrangements where we'd meet later?"

Raichl said he had, and the three of us—Chalupa, Raichl and I—furned into an alley and went through the village. Hermansky, Bures and Gavenda went around it. Of these three, I've only seen Bures since then—in Munich two years later. Gavenda was caught about a year after our escape and executed.

Going through the village of Zabrodske, I took off my prison jacket, wearing my civilian shirt. Although we ran through the village, nobody tried to stop us. Beyond the village were the mountains, but they were a long way off. Our clothes were very muddy now and my leg hurt so much that I tried to pull it along with my pants. Outside the village we saw two buses on the state highway, coming in our direction. They were filled with our pursuers. We feel into the mud, keeping our heads down until the buses went by.

We got up and went on through the plowed fields awhile. Finally I said, "Listen, Pravosh; let's take a break or I'll never make it." But Raichl nagged and coaxed us along. We ran along the highway, thinking that passing cars would destroy our scent for the bloodhounds. I scattered the crushed paprika each time we changed course, having heard it would distract the bloodhounds. At the edge of a forest we all fell to the ground and ate some sugar, bread and vitamin pills for energy.

"Well, Johnny," Raichl said, "we made it! Now I wonder what they think of us!"

Our confidence kept us going. By nightfall, we passed the town of Ikrove, hoping for a place to stop. The town lights looked good to us, but we pushed on. A sudden snapping sound—probably a fox stepping on a twig—made us hit the ground. A moment later, in the thickest part of the forest, Raichl cried out, "Yaw!" and hit the ground again. At first, we thought he'd been shot. But in the moonlight we saw that his eye was bleeding, gashed by a huge thorn.

We left the woods, feeling the fierce wind, and went on that night until my leg was throbbing. "Look, boys," I said. "I can't go on. You go ahead and I'll get by somehow."

Raichl spoke back roughly, saying my wife and parents expected me home, that I had to go on for their sake. Although his face was bleeding, he helped carry and push me along, with the silent Chalupa on my other side. Near another village we were all worn out. Up the road was a sign, and Raichl crawled to it to see where we were. A half hour later he was back, saying he couldn't see the sign because four or five policemen were standing there in the shadows, probably looking for us. He had waited in a drainage ditch until they'd gone.

At around 2 a.m. we reached a farmers' co-operative, a "kolkhoz." We thought maybe we could find a chicken coop, where we could get a chicken or two, kill them and eat them raw. But as we were prowling around, a light went on in one of the farm buildings. We took off again at a run, and kept going until morning, when we were all exhausted. By dawn, my leg was so weak that Raichl and Chalupa took turns carrying me on their shoulders. I kept telling them to let me be and go on themselves. But they kept saying, "Johnny, shut up and don't talk such nonsense."

About 6 a.m. on the morning of January third we came to some straw stacks in an open field. We wanted to burrow a hole in the stacks, hide there and rest all day, but we didn't have time. A farmer was coming to plow the field, so we just crouched in a straw stack and took turns watching, too tired to chase away the field mice. The farmer plowed all day, coming as close to us as twenty-five feet.

Late that afternoon a man came by with a cane and looked over the area. He seemed suspicious. We waited until he passed, then scrambled out. My leg felt a lot worse, as Chalupa had been lying on it all day. Up until midnight that second day, we kept on the move, not knowning exactly where we wanted to go except away from Leopoldov. By midnight we were on the outskirts of another village.

I saw a farmhouse at the edge of town and said, "Look, we've got to get some food and rest. We can't go on this way."

Raichl and Chalupa waited under a tree while I cautiously explored the house from afar. As I went up to the window to look in, a fierce dog barked in the yard. Through the curtains, I could see a table, a kerosene light burning, a baby sleeping in a crib—and then, over in the corner, I saw a typical STB leather topcoat. We took off again, fast.

Next morning, we made out a sign that read: Communist Party Headquarters. Raichl and Chalupa began to run when they saw the sign, but I couldn't because of my leg. After a couple minutes, Pravosh realized I wasn't with them. He came back, took my arm and helped pull me along.

By morning we came to another house. I was for trying to get food here, but Raichl objected, "You're a fool, Johnny, We almost got caught at the last place."

But now, in desperation and in faith, I said, "You stay here and I'll try the house. Otherwise we just can't go on."

Praying to myself, I went up to the gate of the house. A militiaman in a blue uniform came out. "Say," he asked, "aren't you one of those convicts from Leopoldov?"

I wanted to run, and then I felt that God would protect me. "Look," I said, "if you want to turn me in, all right, but please give me something to eat. I haven't eaten for three days."

The militiaman looked at me hard, as if he were battling something. "Go quickly into the house," he said. He came after me and demanded, "Where are the others?

I said there weren't any others. Then I told him that one prisoner was enough and he could just turn me in, but please forget the others. The militiaman just laughed. He followed my tracks through the snow, and finally found Chalupa and Raichl, who were too worn out to run. While he was bringing them back to the house, I warmed up. I found some bread on the table and a partly rotten apple on the window sill, and I ate them both. Finally we all got on good terms and the militiaman gave us some matches and directions for a safe route.

We took off through the woods again and traveled a day and a night along a road leading up to the mountains. About midnight on January fifth, Joe Chalupa said, "Well, Johnny, we might as well stop and have our last cigarettes. Who knows when we'll have another chance?"

I gave Chalupa what was left of my small packet of tobacco. While he and Raichl were rolling their cigarettes, I went on ahead. After about fifteen minutes, I stopped to see if they were coming along. I couldn't hear or see anything. Finally I got up courage to whistle and I thought I heard a reply, but I wasn't sure. I whistled some more, but there was no answer. Then I went back to where I'd left them, but neither Joe nor Pravosh was in sight. I whistled for some time, and then decided I couldn't risk staying there any longer. So I went on up the road alone.

[EDITORS' NOTE.—This is the second of the three articles by Mr. Hvasta. The last, in which he tells of his 21 months as a hunted fugitive, will appear next week.]

[From the Saturday Evening Post, May 29, 1954]

HOW I ESCAPED THE RED TRAP

(By John Hvasta as told to Milton Lehman)

(The ex-sailor from Hillside, N.J., was alone now, a fugitive in communist Czechoslovakia. For twenty-one months he dodged the secret police, hiding in haystacks and crude mountain huts—and trusting his life to the freedom-loving people who live under Red rule.)

CONCLUSION

The hero of this story is not myself. One hero is the people of Czechoslovakia who helped me as I went through the mountains from house to house, from village to village, a fugitive among them. They were farmers, foresters, militiamen, workers, village officials and their wives—and even an official of the STB, the State Secret Police. They risked their lives to protect mine. Today there are others who have escaped from oppression in satellite Europe. Some have slipped across the border at night, some have crashed through the border in a homemade tank, some have flown over the border in stolen airplanes. But few of these, I think, depended for so long on so many people.

(Before I go on, let me say this. In the account that follows, I have carefully disguised the people and places I came to—so that I shall endanger no one who helped me. At the same time, the account is accurate in every important fact and spirit. If an eager STB agent studies this hard, he will find nothing of value. Of course, he might capture the particular Czechoslovaks I met by throwing 90 per cent of his countrymen into prison. The jails of Czechoslovakia aren't quite big enough for that.)

Six years ago, in January, 1948, when I was twenty years old and fresh from the United States Navy, I went to Czechoslovakia to study and revisit my birthplace. Five weeks later, Gottwald and his communists took over the country. In October, 1948, I was arrested on fantastic charges of espionage and tortured to make me "confess," which I never did. In February, 1949, while in prison, I was allowed to marry my fiancée, Gabriela Danis. In June, I was secretly tried, found guilty and sentenced to three years in Leopoldov State Penitentiary. On my appeal in April, 1950, the sentence was increased to ten years. On January 2, 1952, after more than three years in prison, I escaped through the wall of Leopoldov with five fellow prisoners and lived as a fugitive for twenty-one months.

Though our escape party began with six, my friends disappeared suddenly and strangely as we went along. It was like the song the kids used to sing back on Franklin Street in Hillside, New Jersey: ". . . six little, five little, four little Indians, three little, two little, one little Indian ———" On the first day of our escape we lost track of Jaroslav Bures, Josef Hermansky and Stefan Gavenda. On the fourth day I lost Pravosh Raichl and Josef Chalupa and went on by myself, up a winding road into the mountains. I was ravenously hungry and exhausted. My leg, sprained in the escape, was throbbing. I decided to trust myself to God and the first house I came to.

Near midnight on January fifth, I saw the small village of Zilusova—which isn't its name—and a light in a window. As I approached the farmhouse, a small dog barked. For about ten minutes I peered through the window. I saw a large buxom woman with her pretty daughter, busy at the stove, cooking, and a crucifix hanging on the wall. I went around to the door and knocked. After a moment, the woman opened the door.

Mrs. Pavol—which isn't her name—was expecting her husband home from a communist-indoctrination meeting. When she heard the little dog bark, she set a plate of halusky—a Slovakian dish of vegetables, meat and cheese—on the kitchen table. Although frightened, she allowed me to sit by the stove and warm myself. First I said I was lost on a hiking trip. Then I said, carefully, that it was hard to make a living nowadays, much harder than under the old regime. She said nothing. I said it was a shame so many innocent people were now in prison. She showed some interest.

"Well," she said cautiously, "I don't know who you are."

I then went on abusing the present regime, praying I was on the right track. Mrs. Pavol and her daughter exchanged quick glances.

Finally, I said quietly, "Mrs. Pavol, you have my life in your hands. I'm an American and a prisoner from Leopoldov."

Now Mrs. Pavol's features relaxed. "Oh, so that's it," she said. "Don't worry about it. We've helped others—guerrillas, partisans, even American pilots shot down during the war." She called her daughter over. "Maria," she said, "this is our guest. Say nothing about him to anyone." Maria nodded solemnly.

Mrs. Pavol gave me the halusky. She also brought out milk, coffee, meat and fruitcake left over from New Year's Eve. She brought me clean clothes and a basin of water to soak my feet. Then Mr. Pavol, a tall, husky farmer, came in. His wife spoke to him briefly. He shook my hand and said, "Be greeted in God." He made me a bunk in the cellar—a mattress of straw. I dozed off at once, terribly tired and my stomach full.

At five o'clock in the morning Pavol awoke me. The STB, he said, were raiding the next village, searching attics and cellars. He thought I'd be safer in his barn. Pavol brought me one of his wife's dresses and a babushka—or shawl—and in this ridiculous costume I followed him out to the barn, where I covered myself with hay. I slept there until six o'clock that evening, when Maria pounded on the wall to wake me for dinner.

I stayed with the Pavols through Sunday, when we heard that the STB's were closing in on Zilusova. We prayed together, and then I thought to myself, God, help me to survive. And if I'm caught, don't let these people get into trouble. Don't ever let me become the cause of their misfortune.

I left Zilusova with Pavol after midnight, wearing his dark brown trousers and leather mountaineer's cap, and taking the small prayer book Maria gave me. We walked until four o'clock in the morning. Pavol gave me directions to the home of Juraj, his cousin, who would direct me on to the mountain village of Sarbova, and passwords to identify myself. He said, "Good luck, John, and God bless you," and gave me a typical Slovakian strong handshake.

I went up through the mountains, past evergreens weighed down with snow. I used a heavy oak limb as a kind of cane and stopped often to rest because my leg still ached. Once a deer fled across my path. At every noise I crouched or fell to the ground, listening to find out if anyone was following me.

As I was walking downhill, I heard a woman cry out, "No, no, I can't see the poor thing killed."

I hit the dirt and listened. After a while, I discovered that the woman was arguing with her husband, who was about to kill a young shoat illegally. Her husband was trying to calm her down.

Pavol's directions were good and before noon I reached Juraj's modest home. I knocked on the door. Juraj peered out cautiously and I gave him the passwords. Among other things, I said, "Mr. Juraj, Paval told me about the pig you killed last November and how you hid the sausages in the attic."

Jurak invited me inside. He was a forester in the government service who had joined the Communist Party in order to survive. He was due at a party meeting in half an hour. But first his wife, a pretty, warmhearted woman, brought me coffee and slivovitz. While we toasted each other, she packed me a lunch. Juraj gave me 2000 crowns—about forty dollars—some new passwords, and then directed me on to Janko's village of Sarbova.

Inspecting me carefully, he said, "You'll do all right, Johnny. You look just like an STB informer."

That afternoon I followed a path between two mountain slopes. It was the sixth day since my escape, and I began to feel free. At that moment I heard a shrill whistle and fell to the ground. The whistler was a small boy walking with his mother.

They both looked at me queerly and the boy asked, "Mommy, who's that man?"

She said, "I don't know, and don't ask such questions." She pulled him along, but he kept looking back, the feather in his cap bobbing every time he turned his head.

It was after dark when I got to Sarbova. I risked asking directions to Janko's place at the first house I saw. A man came out and said, "Janko? He's right across the way," and insisted on leading me to Janko's door. He stood there while Janko kept asking what I wanted. I stalled until my nosy guide gave up and left; then slipped into Janko's house and closed the door behind me.

Janko was a young, heavy-set factory worker, and suspicious. I gave him Juraj's passwords. "Your wife, Mr. Janko, is expecting relatives," I said, "and you still owe Mr Juraj five hundred crowns."

Janko was not amused. He'd heard of our escape from Leopoldov and reported that STB informers were all over the area, looking for us. Janko wanted me to go on without causing trouble, but his wife persuaded him to let me stay. I slept in Janko's hayloft for thirteen days, pulling up baskets of food by a rope every two or three days. When I caught a fever, Janko sent up asprin and hot drinks.

Though Janko believed my story, he checked and rechecked it. Then, on a Sunday evening, he brought me a razor, soap and brush. "You must shave, John," he declared. "An important person is coming to see you." I scraped off a two weeks' beard and, after sunset, I came down the ladder from the hayloft and went into Janko's house. There I met a ruddy, sharp-eyed gentleman called Ludko and Ludko's cousin, Michal. Ludko made me repeat my story in detail—my full name and birthplace, my work at the United States Consulate General, my studies at the University of Bratislava, the appearance of both the university and the Consulate General, what happened to me in prison, how I escaped. I told it all to Ludko, who kept nodding eagerly. When I finished, Ludko shook my hand heartily. Later, I learned that he was an official of the STB in the area.

I was terrified, positive I'd been trapped, but the secret-policeman reassured me. "You know, John," said Ludko, "I am like the radish—red from the outside, but all white within."

I followed Ludko and Michal to Michal's home, a small frame house near the village of Lahka in the lofty mountains, which we reached before dawn the morning of January twenty-first. I remained with Mr. and Mrs. Michal until April fifteenth that year, helped by the Michals, the Jankos and Ludko.

Ludko dearly loved a plot. He proposed that I write a letter to Gaby to take the STB off my trail. Mrs. Michal stealthily mailed it aboard a train, the STB intercepted it as Ludko planned and called off their agents from Lahka for a time. I addressed the letter to my mother-in-law.

"Dearest Gaby," I wrote, "I escaped from Leopholdov on Wednesday, January the second, with God's help, and I am trying to get to our office in Prague. Your ever-loving husband, John."

Michal's home was modestly furnished and decorated with religious pictures. Michal gave me a suit which was much too big, but stayed on when I pulled the belt tight enough and rolled up the cuffs. The first night, the Michals put me in a narrow secret closet just off their living room, after clearing out some food they had stored there. The door to this closet was only four feet high and I had to stoop to enter it. Mrs. Michal made me a dinner of fried chicken, potatoes, her best preserves and some cherries. I ate and went to sleep around three o'clock in the morning.

For several days I rested. Then one evening Ludko returned in a festive mood. Thus far, he announced, we'd bamboozled the STB. "If I had ten men like myself," he said expansively, "I could abduct Gaby, bring her here and then get both of you across the border." Michal, a quiet agreeing man, simply nodded.

The conference with Janko, Michal and Ludko finally got a little noisy, so that Mrs. Michal had to quiet us down. She noted Ludko's red nose and heard his spirited plans; and she warned us to lower our voices and calm down a little before we invited a real raid from the STB. Before we broke up we reached several agreements.

First, Janko said he would go to find Gaby, who was then sick with tuberculosis in the city hospital on Vazova Street in Bratislava. I gave Janko a snapshot of Gaby and told him we had no password, that I'd warned her to trust no one, and that I hadn't been able to see her for eight months. Janko and Ludko were both sure they could rescue Gaby.

Janko finally said, "Don't you worry, Johnny. Don't you worry about a thing."

Second, we agreed that I'd better move out of the secret room, in case the STB got active again. Mrs. Michal had the best plan. She proposed that I move into the hayloft, where I would dig a hole down about eight feet from the top of the hay and make a clearing below about seven feet by two, packing the hay tight. The clearing would be next to the wall of the barn, so I could get fresh air through the boards. On top of my burrow we'd put a cap of hay to plug the opening and I'd have a ladder to climb out.

For three days the Michals helped me construct my hideaway, where I lived for eighty-one days. After a while the STB got back on my trail and I worked out signals with the Michals. In case of danger, Mrs. Michal sang the folk song *Hej, hory, hory*—"O, mountains, mountains." If it was safe for me to come out of the hayloft, she rendered a little Slovakian tune, Annie, Darling, Where are You?

Meanwhile, Janko went to Bratislava to see about Gaby. He returned greatly disturbed. Trying to contact the underground, he'd found a man named Erich who agreed to abduct Gaby for 50,000 crowns, or $1000. Janko, of course, didn't have that kind of money, but he promised to raise it. Next day, Janko discovered Erich talking quietly to an STB informer. Janko left Bratislava at once.

By mid-April, the STB were once again hot on my trail. After a meeting with Janko, Ludko, and Michal, I agreed that I'd better move into the mountains. Through the summer and fall of 1952, I lived in the woods—in crude huts I constructed of boughs, leaves, twigs and tar paper. My first hut was built from four trees and six-foot branches, which I fastened together with a hatchet and some nails.

On the floor I had sacks filled with straw as a mattress, and Michal brought tar paper to put on the roof in case of rain. I ditched the hut and camouflaged it, remembering some of my Navy training and even my Boy Scout work back in Hillside, New Jersey—which had never seemed useful before.

In the mountains I felt a lot freer than in Michal's hayloft. For one thing, the air was clear and fresh. For another, there were signs of spring everywhere—new ferns and ivy growing on the slopes, the wild flowers budding, the birds coming back. The first night I heard the owls saying, "Who? Who?" and I almost thought they were talking to me. About four o'clock in the morning an owl hooted right over my head and I woke up sweating. I'd been dreaming that three STB men were after me, one of them up in a tree. This STB fell down on the rocks and broke his ankle. I wanted to run, but I couldn't run fast enough. After the dream I tried to go back to sleep, but I couldn't.

My new residence was the first of four huts I built in the mountains. They were beautiful mountains. My first hut was located in a clearing surrounded by dense growth—saplings, shrubs and thickets. A little farther away were ancient oaks and evergreens. During daylight hours, I whittled some chess figures and tried to play solitaire chess. I also whittled a box for a compass, and Michal had a piece of metal magnetized for a needle. I made myself a clock by placing a stick in the ground and marking off hourly intervals around the stick. At night I just lay on my blanket outside the hut and watched the sky, the stars and the moon.

For all this Robinson Crusoe life, I never had much chance to forget the danger I was in. Once some Czechoslovak scouting planes swooped low over my hut. They were always busy hunting for fugitives in the woods. Another time, two nosy hunters came right up to my hut, poked their heads through the camouflage of branches, snapping twigs, and said, "Don't worry, don't worry. You don't have to be afraid of us." I'd already picked up my hatchet as a weapon. They explained they were merely hunting a wild boar, since ordinary meat was almost unobtainable.

From the animals around me, I learned that all living things want freedom. In prison I'd learned to make wicker baskets, so I made a trap of twigs, put bits of bread inside and caught field mice—the one with short tails and short ears. When I trapped them, no matter how much bread I'd put inside—and once I put cream on the bread—the mice always tore away at the trap, trying to get free.

Foxes inspected my quarters and porcupines came so close I could feel their needles. Once I tamed two sparrows with bread crumbs, drawing them closer and closer to my hut until, finally, they trusted themselves to eat from my open palm and would come when I whistled for them.

The nosy boar hunters caused me to destroy my first hut and build a second hut about a mile away. Some people were always roving the woods, mostly young couples hunting a place to court out of sight of their elders. But occasionally there were prowling STB's and sometimes men who might have been STB's. Michal, therefore, brought me a pair of field glasses and I would climb a tree and inspect the area whenever I heard strange noises. Michal and his wife kept bringing me food and also some books in Slovak. I read Tolstoy's War and Peace and Dostoievski's Crime and Punishment, and I memorized the Lord's Prayer in seventeen languages.

Whenever Michal or his wife came up to the mountain to see me, they identified themsleves by special yodels or little songs. Mrs. Michal liked to sing a gypsy song, "I'm a little girl, cingi-lingi-bum." At moments of danger she would sing certain folk songs we'd agreed upon. She sang one warning song when six STB agents in a squad car came up the mountain and then prowled around on foot. They came close enough for me to hear the cracking of twigs—but I was already up in a tree and well hidden.

On July 4, 1952, Indpendence Day back in New Jersey, I'd arranged with the Michals that we'd drink a toast to freedom at the same time—I in my woods hut and they in their house below. Alone on the mountainside, I raised my cup and said, 'To my own freedom and may God help me to get it soon. And, more than that, to Gaby's freedom—and to all others enslaved by communism."

In October the leaves began to fall and there was no hope of camouflaging my hut. I moved into Michal's secret room and the hide-away in the hayloft until November eleventh. My friends had all made careful attempts to reach Gaby or to abduct here and bring here to me. All these attempts failed. They reported that Gaby had been moved from Bratislava to the coal regions of Novaky by the STB, and later to Partyzanske. The STB believed I would try to make contact with her, and then they could trap me. Thanks to Ludko, the friendly official of the STB, we made no foolish mistakes.

On November eleventh the STB were on my trail again and I left the mountain village of Lahka, after a conference with Ludko, Janko and the Michals. We knew there was a price on my head. In communist Czechoslovakia, there were no pictures posted in the local post office of the ten most wanted men. The STB, unlike our FBI, never dares announce its fugitives. In tneir government against the people, most people are always ready to help those against the government. But I knew I was wanted from the increased efforts of the STB to track me down.

Before I left Lahka, Janko said, "Remember, Johnny, we saved your life and tried to help Gaby. Now you try to spare ours."

I vowed I would never reveal their real names to anyone. I didn't tell them where I was going. They were sorry to see me leave; Mrs. Michal cried a little. The Michals gave me a blanket, a knapsack, sandwiches and a map—I already had my homemade compass. I walked through the mountains for a day and a half until I reached the city of Petrovo and the apartment house of Mr. and Mrs. Stefan, where I sayed until February sixteenth.

Mrs. Stefan and her young boy were home when I arrived. Quietly I said, "Pan Boh pomahaj" ("God be with you"), and explained I was a friend of Mr. Malina, a fellow prisoner, who told me to find his cousins, the Stefans, if I ever got out. Mrs. Stefan was very uneasy. But when her husband came home at five o'clock, he believed me. Mr. Stefan was a rough, burly sort. A factory worker, he had avoided politics until he was sent to prison; now he was fascinated by politics.

"How did you manage to hide so long?" he asked.

"With God's help and good people like yourself," I replied.

At Stefan's, we had talks about politics in Czechoslovakia and at home, about the lot of the worker and the housewife in both countries, among other things. I showed him a photograph of my father, who works in a Newark, New Jersey, brewery, sitting in his shirtsleeves in his brand-new sedan. Stefan shook his fist.

"The communists tell us nothing but lies!" he exclaimed.

At Stefan's I stayed in the bathroom or bedroom—under the bed, whenever they expected company. I didn't really feel safe, though. Early in Feburary, when the apartment-house superintendent began snooping around and saw me, I knew it was time to pack up.

Before midnight on February 16, 1953, Stefan produced an identify card he'd borrowed from a friend who resembled me, and we left Petrovo on foot. We walked all night, arriving before dawn in the village of Kosa Dolina and the home of Marek, a boss of woodchoppers. Marek was young, very sociable and quite good with a shotgun. He liked his life in the woods and knew all about trees. he put me up in some straw in his attic and I remained there through May, while my friends made two attempts to get me across the border into the American zone. Neither attempt succeeded.

On Marek's radio we listened to Western broadcasts. One day Marek heard that Stalin had died and came rushing up to my attic hide-out.

"Johnny, Johnny," he yelled, "the greatest cutthroat is dead!" In Slovak, there are two words for "dead"—"zdochol," which is used for animals, and "zomrel," which is used for humans. Marek said "zdochol." About a week later, Marek came up yelling again with the news that Klement Gottwald, president of Czechoslovakia, had also died.

The radio from the West had linked my name to Willam Oatis, the Associated Press reporter, who had been tried and imprisoned for espionage. Our State Department was demanding the release of both Oatis and me. This sounded encouraging. After May sixteenth, when Oatis was released, there was much more talk of my case. After a long meeting with Marek, I decided to write to Antonin Zapotocky, the new president of Czechoslovakia. I said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: I, the undersigned John Hvasta, an American who escaped from Leopoldov prison on January 2, 1952, ask you to grant me a free exit in order that I may go home.

I made the mistake of escaping—but the courts of Czechoslovkia made a mistake in imprisoning me, since I was and am innocent of all charges.

I am willing to admit my mistake—and request a free exit from Czechoslovakia.

Sincerely,

JOHN HVASTA.

I also wrote another brief letter to my wife, Gaby:

MY DEAREST: As you probably know, I have escaped, but I have not been able to write to you because of dangers. I love you more than ever, and I know what you must be going through because of me. That's why I didn't write to you sooner or try to contact you.

You know as well as I that I didn't do anything for which I should have been put in prison. Pray to God that He will help both of us get home soon together. Keep your spirit up and never lose your faith. I love you with all my heart.

JOHN.

Then I added a postscript:

P.S.: Please, whoever receives this letter, tell my wife about it.

Mrs. Marek deposited both letters in the mail slot of a train's postal car. We expected that the letters would be intercepted by the STB and hoped they might encourage President Zapotocky to grant my release. But as time went on, we realized that the letters had accomplished nothing.

Late in May, Marek took me by train to his relatives, the Antons, who lived near the city of Cukrovske. Anton was a farmer. He was uneasy about leaving me, for my own safety, alone in his house while he worked in his fields. For that reason, I made one more hut for myself in the woods nearby.

Both Anton and Marek argued that I should be patient, that my letters might still get results. Now I tried to get word to our ambassador in Prague. I was all for risking another train trip—to Prague, to try to get into the American Embassy. Early in September, Marek went to Prague to explore. He reported back that the Embassy was being closely watched by the Czechoslovak police, who were posted twenty yards from the gates. However, there had been no STB raids on the Prague train in recent weeks.

On the last day of September, I was ready to leave for Prague. Two days before, Anton said, "At least, Johnny, we must bleach your hair and change your appearance." He went to a pharmacist in a nearby town, bought a bottle of hydrogen peroxide, packed it in his suitcase and came home. But when he opened the suitcase, we saw that the cork had popped out and the peroxide had ruined Anton's clothes.

Strangely, I was not disturbed. I felt that my plan for freedom would succeed. The next morning I was ready to leave. Mrs. Marek would go with me, so that she could report back the results. Toward evening we gathered in Anton's living room. Everybody was a little nervous. Mrs. Anton came to me first and said, "Johnny, you're like a son to me. If you're caught and have to talk, tell only about me, not the others. I'm old and won't live long anyway."

Later, Mr. Anton took me aside. "John," he declared, "If you're caught, give only my name. I can take imprisonment better than the rest."

Before I left, Marek looked at me and said, "I'm young and can endure a good bit. In case you get into trouble, only mention me."

I tried to make each one feel that God would protect us and that everything would turn out all right. We went to bed early and slept for about three hours. Just before midnight we said good-by, and Mrs. Marek and I boarded a bus for the nearest large city, which we reached in the morning. We had several hours before train time, which I spent in church as the safest place. Then we caught the local train to the next large city, where we had two hours before the express to Prague.

First we sat on a park bench, eating our supper of cheese and sandwiches. Then we went to a church for services. And them, with time still left, we went to a movie theater. I hadn't seen a movie in a long time and relaxed more than I should. When I asked the man next to me what time it was, Mrs. Marek gasped that it was already after train time. In a panic we left the theater and raced through the streets to the station. The train was seven minutes late. It pulled out as we climbed aboard.

We reached Prague in the morning. I hadn't been there since 1948, on my way to the University of Bratislava, and I didn't know my way around. We walked past the national museum, along the River Vltava. I remembered that our Embassy was near the old town square, but couldn't quite find the way. I asked an old man running for a streetcar.

He paused a moment, pointed and said, "Just follow along to the left."

Mrs. Marek puffed along behind me until I approached the Embassy. About twenty yards from the Embassy gates, I saw a Czechoslovak policeman. As I was watching him, he turned to the right, crossed the street and began talking to another policeman. When I came to the gates, I saw they were open. I waved my hat to Mrs. Marek—a sign for her to turn back—and I raced through the gates.

Now that it's over, I think through those six long years I survived. I think first of moments when the faith my mother taught me became totally clear, when I became convinced for now and the rest of my life that God is real and that He protects.

I think of the people who helped me—the Czechoslovaks living under the terror who took an American fugitive into their homes; the men in our Consulate General who tried to talk sense to rulers without reason, but only vengeance and hate; the ambassadors and their staff in our Embassy in Prague, who welcomed me and whose guest I was until I came home; the people at home who tried in one way or another to help—members of the State Department, congressmen and senators, and my mother, father and brother, Steve, back in New Jersey, who lived through these years in faith and hope.

I think above all of Gaby, praying that she will survive, wondering if there is anything I can do now or could ever have done to protect her more, wondering if there is any humanity left in those who rule a country of once-great men. I know I thought of Gaby most of all on February 4, 1954, when I crossed the Czechoslovak border into Germany—it was the fifth anniversary of our marriage in prison.

I think of those who escaped from Leopoldov with me—Pravosh Raichl, who is now on his way to the United States, wanting to become a citizen; Joe Chalupa, now employed by the American service troops in Germany; Jarda Bures, who is working for Radio Free Europe; Joe Hermansky, whose fate is still unknown; and Stefan Gavenda.

I think finally of Gavenda and of how much we must learn as a reasonable nation in an unreasonable world. When Gavenda escaped to Germany, telling our story, he was not believed. Our own American officials there thought the tale of our escape incredible. Gavenda went back to Czechoslovakia to find me and bring me back as proof. I don't know for certain what happened to him, but I've heard the he was caught and executed by the communists. Nor were the others who escaped with me believed until I could come out myself and tell the truth.

It was all true. And this was the way it happened.

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—This is the last of three articles.]

[Translation from Czech, June 1984]

INVITATION OF POPLE JOHN PAUL II TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA

In 1985 the Catholic faithful in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic anticipate celebrating the 11th century anniversary of the death of St. Method, who stands as a first Christian and cultural leader of the Czechs and Slovaks. During these preparations Archbishop Francis Cardinal Tomasek of Prague sent a letter to Pope John Paul II in which he invited him to visit Czechoslovakia next year to celebrate this unique occasion. As a result, a spontaneous petition drive was started during which Catholics began to sign their names under a short statement which began, "Holy Father, please come to Czechoslovakia". The significance of this action is that the faithful in Czechoslovakia realize their unity with each other and the Pope. John Paul, II is also at the same time a symbol of the serious attempt for a deeper understanding of life's struggle for today's man and the respect of this needs for basic rights. In this he has found sympathy from many faithful as well as non-believers in Czechoslovakia.

The STB began to exert pressure on some dioceses to refrain from this activity and in effect to publicly disown it. Those who had in any way involved themselves in the activity and the police found out about them were interrogated and warned about consequences. The police in several instances used physical repression against individuals. In Kmetov, Nove Zamky district of Slovakia there were three young Slovak Catholics Josef Juracek, Oto Svec and Josef Sadovsky who became the victims. They were taken to the local police headquarters in Velka Mana. Interrogations were conducted by Major Benca, Lieutenant Szabo and Lieutenant Toman and others. The young men refused to tell where they kept the petitions. Police officers hit Svec and Josef Sadovsky, conducting the interrogation from 6:00 until 10:00 P.M. and kicked and use foul language against them. The STB yelled and accused them of wanting to bring the same situation as in Poland, and as it was in 1968 (info. added . . . during Dubcek's short-lived Spring).

On March 26, (1984) the STB confiscated from a 40 year old worker Martin Stieranka from Hrustin, District Dolny Kubin, Slovakia, around 1,000 petitions with signatures. On March 31, he was brought to the District division of the Public Security police in Dolny Kubin, where the STB interrogated him until very late at night during which he was beaten with a black-jack on his heels. Police did not care how he managed to get home following the brutal treatment.

In Tencin, Slovakia, and Brno, Moravia investigations were conducted by the State Secret Security who claimed that such petition-signing violated the law on "incitement to criminal activity" according to penal code 100.

Despite such threatening campaign by the STB, over 17,000 individuals signed the petitions throughout the country. During normal times many more would have signed. But, the 17,000 showed the determination of all Catholics and non-Catholics, and even non-believers in the Czech and Slovak lands. In this current situation when the State seeks to divide the Church with the help of "Pacem in Terris" from the real Catholic Church whose symbol of unity is Pope John Paul II, there is among the faithful a comprehension of responsibility that without each individual's convictions it is not possible to defend the Christian heritage. The spontaneous feeling of personal responsibility which does not expect solutions to critical problems from official circles only, shows every honorable believer that one cannot stand still and passively suffer the rude methods forced by aetheistic propaganda. One must openly proclaim and defend the values whose applications in life can significantly help in the revival of our two nations.

[From the Slovak Press Digest, June 1983]

PERSECUTION OF FRANCISCANS IN SLOVAKIA

(By Anton Hlinka)

On April 8 the German Catholic Press Service KNA published reports about a far reaching action of the State Security Service in Slovakia and the Czech countries directed against the real and the alleged members of the Franciscan order—male and female. According to KNA further details penetrated recently from Slovakia to the West which show that this was a thoroughly prepared strategic attack of the secret police and the public security, remindful of the attack against the brothers in their monasteries in 1950.

In each and every case the attack was preceded by several more or less unobtrusive precautions or preparations. It was, for instance, possible to notice in the vicinity of the earmarked homes an increased activity for seemingly unsuspicious members or spies of the State Security. In some instances these members or spies got their information about the activities of the shadowed persons on Friday before the Palm Sunday. They then put under surveillance not only the houses and apartments of the suspects but also the suspects themselves. Somebody was always shadowing them, no matter whether they walked, travelled by car or by train. If somebody managed—even by chance—to escape, he or she were expected at their return, for instance at the main railway station in Bratislava, where about thirty members of the National Security Force in uniform were waiting for three women to ask them their identification. These women were then followed by "unsuspicious civilians" to their homes.

The order to attack was given to the police on the Palm Sunday, March 27. According to the news from Slovakia for instance already in the early morning hours of the same day an unidentified young girl rang the bell of the home of 28-year-old Peter Rucka in Bratislava, Stanicna ulica, pretending to be bringing a message. Instead of the girl, several members of the State Security entered or rather rushed into Rucka's home and immediately started to establish the identity of those present. There were about eleven, mostly young people, in the building. When the police started searching the house, Rucka and his friends asked to see their search warrant. The police ignored this request—probably because they did not have it—and took no heed of the protests of the young people. During the search which lasted from Sunday morning until Monday midday, the police proceeded exceptionally drastically: they tore up the linoleum, split open the feather comforters, emptied the flower pots, threw out everything from the closets, even dug the garden—not to do any weeding though. After about thirty hours they left with a rich trophy. They confiscated several hundred religious books, but also technical books and novels, tape recorders, tapes, saving books and about 8,000 crowns in cash.

The same morning members of the State Security knocked on the door na Krizovatkeach 74, Bratislava, at the home of 28-year-old Anton Smid where they found seventeen young people. Among them also Ales Zlamal who objected against this assault and asked members of the Security to show their search warrant. Two of them, in fact, left in order to get it, came back with a piece of paper containing some kind of order which was later found unsatisfactory. In the meantime they drove the young people into a corridor where they kept them under a guard. Soon the corridor resounded with the rythmical prayer of the rosary and with religious songs—even for those who persecute the church. Members of the Security evidently realized that they were outwitted. . . . The search lasted until 3 a.m., when they took Smid away. Even during his absence, however, the search went on. When the police departed, the house was literally ransacked.

The State Security used a ruse to surprise Mrs. Rapsik in Bratislava, Sumracna 4, also in the morning of the Palm Sunday. One of the policeman pretended to be a mailman. The Rapsiks have a lodger, Vincencia Zanova, who is suspected of unauthorized renewal of the life of the Order. The house search was conducted during her absence and, of course, without a search warrant. Zanova later sent a letter to the municipal procurator in Bratislava in which she complained about the procedure of the State Security. The other victims sent similar letters.

On the same day or during the following days the police forcefully entered the homes of 31-year-old Jaroslav Brazda and Maria Jakubikova in Kosice, Helena Tolkosova in Presov, two nurses 28-year-old Olga Ivakova and 30-year-old Marta Cervena in Trstena, Katarina Stelbaska in Svit, the Demcaks in Vranovo, as well as two women in Ruzomberok, suspected of being members of the order of Franciscan teaching sisters. Sixteen members of the State Security forcibly entered their apartment and conducted a thorough house search as they did in all previously mentioned places.

In connection with the Franciscan Order the police visited also Mons. Viktor Trstensky. They confiscated all the religious literature, his whole personal correspondence and all written material. The conduct of the police upset the Monsignor to such a degree that he had to be hospitalized for two days.

In Poprad the police proceeded with singular harshness against 30-year-old Maria Binderova and 28-year-old Hanka Rrpakova. Following the house search, during which the police confiscated all religious literature, cash, a crucifix which was hanging on the wall and other items, the police abducted them for interrogation to the [illegible]ce station where they remained in custody for two and a half days. To intimi[illegible] them, they forced them to wear prison clothes.

[illegible]he secret policemen in Hlohovec showed a remarkable inventiveness. On Palm Sunday, during the passion play, some unidentified men approached the organ player Tendekova with the news that there was gas leak in her apartment. When she handed over the keys to her apartment, they insisted that she leave with them and at once. When they reached the street, they introduced themselves as members of the State Security. They conducted a thorough house search and confiscated all her religious literature.

Thus ended the first round of the State Security's action against the Franciscan Order. It is impossible to say with any certainty whether it was conducted purely from the initiative of the State Security or whether they acted on a government order. It would not have been the first time that the State Security acted on its own, or to be more precise, independently from the government in Bratislava or in Prague, but solely in dependence of its superiors, the KGB in Moscow.

The first round had further implications. Franciscan brothers from the parish as well as those whose identity the police discovered during the house searches or from the correspondence, possibly from personal notes of arrested persons, were called in for interrogation.

According to the news from Slovakia, the arrested persons and the interrogated persons behaved with fortitude. Some of them categorically refused to testify, others refused to sign the protocol and are now threatened with a fine. During the interrogations the police allegedly used all methods from sweet talk to threats and to physical force.

The brother of the imprisoned Peter Rucka, Lubos, is in his fifth year of theological studies in Bratislava. The State Security is trying in every possible way to get him to participate in the activities of Pacem in Terris, and to cooperate with the police. If he does not accept their offer, they threatened to make it impossible for him to be consecrated. The superiors of the seminary urge him so it is said, to undergo a medical checkup, since he is showing signs of nervous breakdown. Lubos Rucka is said to be against it from fear that a biased diagnosis could be used as a pretext to refuse him consecration for a priest.

In connection with the offensive against the Franciscan brothers in Slovakia, there are at the present time eight young people imprisoned: Anton Smid, Peter Rucka, Alojz Glabasnia, Jaroslav Brazda, Olga Ivakova, Marta Cervena and the previously mentioned two women from Ruzomberok. Nobody knowss how this situation is going to end. Nobody knows either whether the attack against the Franciscan Order is only a warning for the Order and for other Orders, or whether it is a beginning of a widespread and systematic attempt to liquidate the Orders of this country, in the foolish conviction, that secret brothers are more dangerous to a socialist society than brothers working under the supervision of the secretaries of the church.

FURTHER DETAILS OF THE PROSECUTION OF FRANCISCANS IN SLOVAKIA

John Vaughn, the general supervisor of the order, protested—in name of 20,000 Franciscans from the whole world in a telegram of April 7, 1983 addressed to the President of the Czechoslovak Republic against continuous persecution of the Franciscans in Czechoslovakia. A week before Easter, the State Security Police undertook a concentrated action against numerous Franciscans in different places in Czechoslovakia. They arrested 20 members of the order, carried out numerous house searches and confiscated a great quantity of materials—described as of "suspicious nature" specially religious literature and many personal belongings. The arrested were submitted to interrogation by the police and 15 were released after some time, while 5 remain in investigatory detention. According to the news from Bratislava and Prague, included are the Provincial Frantisek Kubicek, the Fathers Alois Moca, Juraj Tuma, Frantisek Pometla and Juraj Mazanec. The first three worked in the vicinity of Prague and the others around Plzen.

According to news from the German Catholic News Agency (KNA) of April 7, the following occurred: In the morning of Palm Sunday before the mass six members of the National Security Police and one woman arrived in Bratislava at the house of Krizovatka 74, in order to carry out a house search in the house of the Provincial and the members of the order. He calmly demanded a written search warrant from the State Prosecutor. Because they had none, the Provincial warned them that they are violating the law and asked them not to use force. The officer in charge said that he has an order to carry out the search and ordered to photograph all the male and female members of the order present. Shortly afterward they took the Provincial and one of the sisters to the police quarters for interrogation. The Provincial refused to answer to the questions of the police.

According to the report of the Press Agency (KNA) the same day arrived news from Rostok, where according to the police was the "illegal" settlement of the Franciscans under the leadership of Vojtech Zlamal. The interrogation revealed that a few young men lived there, as members of the Franciscan order—which according to the police—was not permitted. One of them, Pavol Lecka, resisted the house search, and was tied up by police and handcuffed to the radiator. Later all of them were taken to the police for interrogation. According to the testimony of numerous eye witnesses the police confiscated a number of things, among them cash, books, personal correspondence and all the typewritten material, without writing down a list, simply by throwing them into luggage and bags and carried them away. The members of the police particularly were searching for literature relating to the Franciscan order, their form of community life, conditions of admission, etc.

The search lasted full seven hours and the following interrogation at the police station an additional five hours. Most of the questions were concerned with the structures of the Franciscan order, its organization activities and the forbidden study of theology. The police wanted the interrogated to admit directly or indirectly that they belong to the "illegal franciscan seminar" for the formation of secret priests. Another important point of interrogation were the financial conditions of various members of the community, their property and finding the names of persons who send out information about the conditions of the church in Czecho-Slovakia.

The Austrian Catholic Press Service (Kathpress) of April 8 points out in connection with these reports that there exists a connection between these police interventions against Franciscans in the whole Republic and the penal proceedings against the already deceased Franciscan Father Jan Barta.

Barta was sentenced to 18 months in April 1982 for "illegal" religious activity. The principal accusation against him was that he taught theology to lay persons. The State Security Police apparently suspected some of the collaborators of Barta that they continue in his activities.

According to the same Press Agency the attack against Franciscans should be considered as a part of the offensive against the so-called "secret" church. The Missionary center of Franciscans in Bonn—the capital of the German Federal Republic, believes that in Czechoslovakia there are special units of State Security and their civilian collaborators and spies whose function it is to find out the places where there are conducted communal prayers, readings of the Bible and courses of religious education. The greatest effort of the State Security however is directed to discover the so-called student religious study circles.

According to the above Missionary Center in Bonn the arrested Franciscans were accused that they organized religious courses for adults interested in Franciscan ideas and provided them with teaching materials. Missionary center further points out "Czechoslovak authorities reveal with these drastic interventions and dubious activities their frustration and show to the whole world that in Czechoslovakia there continues persecution of the citizens whose only crime is their religious conviction, and its intensification and manifestation".

Those who are familiar with the Czech and Slovak religious scenery took note that some time now the burden of the brutal police intervention is almost exclusively directed against the members of the Catholic Church. Other religious groups are apparently far less interesting to the police than active christians. There are even some who believe that all this police alarm is nothing else than the prologue to the visit of the Vatican diplomatic mission to Prague. Apparently the Czecho-Slovak government wants to signal the Holy See that it does not intend to liberalize its long standing legal order restricting religion.

A LETTER TO PRESIDENT HUSAK

(A verbatim translation from the Slovak)

Dr. GUSTAV HUSAK,
President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Prague—The Castle.

MR. PRESIDENT: We are appealing to you as inhabitants of this country and as citizens of this State. We are appealing to you as the constitutional guarantor of the laws of this Republic. This function lays down on you the highest legal and political responsibility for the conditions in the state.

A number of events in the recent time has led us to this appeal, events which inspire in us apprehension as to the possibility of practicing our religious convictions in Czechoslovakia—but the immediate reason for this appeal is the last intervention of the State Security organs against the believers on March 27 of this year.

Sunday the March 27th—Palm Sunday—at about 7:00 a.m., several houses and apartments all around Slovakia (in Bratislava, Hlohovec, Kosice, Presov, Trstena—on March 29th—Turdosin, Ruzomberok, Lubochna, Poprad, Svit, Vranovo, were occupied by the details of the State Security. They carried out house searches and arrested all persons present. Further, house searches and arrests were carried out at the same time in several places in Bohemia and Moravia.

The house searches and arrests were directed against persons who have from their inner beliefs consecrated their lives to God. Inspired by the example of St. Francis of Assissi, they adapted their lives, to those of the socially weakest members of the society and assisted them. At the same time they carried out all the responsibilities of their jobs, and were considered by their employers as good employees. The free time they devoted to deepening their faith. Particularly this part of their life was of special interest to the State Security. During house searches in individual houses and apartments the State Security confiscated hundreds of items of literature concerning religious education, prayer books, crosses, etc. The Security interrogated tens of persons and the questions concerned mainly the source of religious literature, participation in Masses, and the circle of people engaged in these activities. At least eight persons in Slovakia were kept in investigative detention and accused of the so-called interference in the control of the churches which they allegedly committed with their participation in the "illegal" Franciscan Order.

The intervention of State Security is a blatant violation of the laws in force. The Constitution of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic guarantees all citizens religious freedom. The international covenant on civilian and political rights ratified by Czechoslovakia and published in the Collection of laws under No. 120/1976 covers all of the activities of the accused for which they are being punished. Religious rights are further specified and guaranteed in greater detail in the Declaration of religious tolerance adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1981 and imposing on our Republic at least a moral responsibility. Finally, the right to exchange information—which covers also religious literature—is contained in the final act of the Helsinki Conference which was signed personally by you, Mr. President, on behalf of Czechoslovakia.

The intervention of the State Security on March 27th was carried out illegally also in some details. In Bratislava the members of the State Security did not communicate during the search the consent of the state procurator. They did not permit the interested parties to be present during the search. They did not deliver the copy of the protocol concerning confiscated items. The accusation is groundless also because religious orders, including the Franciscan Order, are not prohibited in our country by any law.

Our concern is increased by the fact that this intervention against the believers among our citizens was carried out as a part of a whole chain of penal interventions related to religious activities in recent years. These events remind us in many aspects of the evil period in the post-war history of our Republic which we thought was irrevocably overcome. The proceeding against believers accused of interference of control over churches were carried out with de facto exclusion of the public before courts which cannot be described as independent and with limited ability on the part of the accused to prove their innocence during the penal prosecution. Mr. President, your own personal faith in the fifties is a warning into what tragic situations can citizens be forced by state apparatus controlled by an intolerant ideology.

In view of this fact, as well as in view of your responsibility before the laws and before the history of this Republic, we are appealing to you: please stop the developing persecutions of believers. Order release of those arrested on March 27 gf this year afd stop their penal prosecution.

In April 1950 the security in a similar manner occupied all monasteries in the Republic and kept their inhabitants years in illegal detention in camps of internment. They expected—and not only the Security—that this will lead to liquidation of religious orders, latest with the dying out of their then religious members. Today, 33 years later, the Security again is arresting young people born after 1950 and persecutes them for belonging to religious orders. This persecution will not liquidate the orders but will harm the state which is persecuting them.

The Slovak history is for 1100 years bound with Christianity and the cultural history of our nation cannot be imagined without the activity of the religious orders. This is another reason why we believe that we have the right and duty to appeal to the invervention of the State Security, perhaps even more pressing than the legal regulations.

[Editors note.—This letter was signed by 87 persons.]

INDIVIDUALS DETAINED AND ARRESTED DURING MASS RAID ON FRANCISCANS

Ing. Vária Sumilasová, Palárikova 2, Košice; Vária Jakubiková Tatranská 2, Košice; Ing. Jaroslav Brázda, Bajkalská 7, Košice—arrested; Byatrik Janik, Bajkalaká 7, Košice; Kária Bindarová, Poprad, Pionierska ul.; Anna Tarpáková, Poprad, Pionierska ul.; Helena Sebestová, Prešov; Helena Torkošová, Prešov; Stefánia Mihalusová, Ružmberok, Pod skalkou—arrested; Anna Holičková, Ružomberok, Pod skalkou—arrested; Olga Iváková, Tvrdošin, Sidl.Medvedzie—arrested; Marta Cervená, Tvrodšin, sidl. Medvedzie—arrested; Mária Janščová, Budatin; Viera Onderková, Košice; Anton Smid, Bratislava, Na Križovatkách—arrested; Terézia Smidov, Bratislava; Vincencia Záňová, Bratislava, Súmrač 4; Peter Ručka, Bratislava, Staničná—arrested; Lubomira Lampartová, Bratislava; Terézia Sčurková, Bratislava; Anna Sčrková, Bratislava; Františka Fendeková, Hlohovec; Mária Carnogurská, Bratislava; Marta Andelová, Trnava; Anna Bodonková, Trnava; Veronika Carnoguraka, Trstená, Stefan Janik, Mnišek n/Popradoa; and Ing. Glabasnia, Bratislava, Na Križovatkách—arrested.

[Bratislava, June 13, 1983]

Pursuant to the provisions of Article 176, Section 1 of the Penal Code, the District Attorney brings charges against:

(1) Peter Rucka, born March 10, 1955 in Bratislava at Stanicna No. 5, employed as a store keeper at the public Polygraphic Institutes for intermediate studies. Detained in prison since March 27, 1983.

(2) Anton Smid, born May 5, 1955 in Bratislava, his last permanent residence 74 Na Krizovatkach, Bratislava; librarian at the University Clinic for Internal Medicine, 13 Mickiewiczova Street, Bratislava. Imprisoned since March 27, 1983.

To wit: The two accused, at least since 1974 up to their detainment, lived in the Slovak Socialist Republic (SSR), but in Bratislava, especially, were actively engaged in the illegal Order of St. Francis of Assisi, and without the permission of the State organized secret theological studies, using the residences at 5 Stanicna Street and 74 Na Krizovatkach, Bratislava, for future members of said Order. Regularly held religious rituals, recruited young people into the novitiate preparing them for the work in the Order and with the rest of the members obtained, especially from abroad, illegal religious literature. These publications were then used by themselves as well as by the other members and then, also thru intermediaries, distributed further, thus with the intention to hinder or to make the supervision of the State over the Church or other religious associations more difficult, violated the law pertaining to the economic security of the Churches and other religious institutions, and thus committed a crime against Article 178 of the Penal Code.

THE PARTICULARS

The investigation has shown the following:

The accused Peter Rucka and Anton Smid started to make calls, probably since 1973, at the Home for the Retired, located at Rusovska Cesta in Bratislava where, at that time, the Sisters of the Order of St. Francis of Assisi were caring for the retired persons. Under their influence the accused were admitted into the novitiate of the Order on May 31, 1974. True to the General Constitution of the "Friars Minor" both made the pledge of purity, poverty and obedience—and also the—eternal pledge—so-called ceremonial. Upon completion of the necessary number of theological subjects on the "Minor and Major Theologie" and additional subjects prescribed for the faculties in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (CSSR) both were ordained secretly into the priesthood on December 7, 1980, in the German Democratic Republic (NDR.).

The celebration of their first mass was attended by a great number of relatives and members of the Order. This took place in the basement at 5 Stanicna ulica. Both were wearing the priestly garments.

The education in theology was conducted by priests from various localities in the Republic and without the permission of the State. Among them were Vojtech Zlamal and also, now deceased, Jozef Barta (known in the Order as Ales and Jan Baptista, respectively), member of the Order of St. Francis of Assisi.

Most of his work was devoted to prepare the "General Constitution of the Friars Minor" and on the actual living conditions of the Brothers in the communities and the life-style in the monasteries. The investigation has shown that two monastic houses in Bratislava at 5 Stanicna ulica and 74 Na krizovatkach belonged, at the time of the purchase, to persons undoubtedly members of the Order of St. Francis of Assisi, according to the records of the State Notary. Co-owners of the house at 74 Na Krizovatkach are Anton Smid, Terezia Smidova and Maria Majercakova—before her it was Maria Ilencikova. The family dwelling at 5 Stanican ulica, the co-owners are Peter Rucka, Anna Bodorikova and Helena Sebestova, all members of the Order. Others, officially registered, lived in the house and a great number of people congregated there for the purposes of religious education, celebration of masses, group prayers, examinations and other religious activities.

For their own needs, as well as others, the accused obtained and distributed religious literature for most part published abroad.

Found was also literature with incriminating texts, for example a book titled "Jan Vojtassak"; prominently portraying the representatives of the Slovak State, which takes a negative approach to the partizans and calls the German army "protectors of civilization". Another book, copied by Xerox, "Atlet na Petrovom stolci" also contains objectionable material. During the search of houses there was religious literature designed exclusively for use at the theological faculties in the CSSR. Also books published abroad and copied by various techniques, such as Xerox, typewriter, etc. A copy machine ASTRATHERM 01, serial number 2 and production number 811983. It was found that the material was typed in typewriters confiscated during the various house searches.

Found during the house searches and conficated were clerical garments.

During the preliminary hearing the accused Peter Rucka expressed sympathy with the St. Francis of Assisi. He said further that he has no knowledge of any religious articles in the basement of 5 Stanicna uliva and does not know who could have placed them in the basement. He is not aware of any objectionable activity and knows nothing about copying equipment. He refused to answer questions connected with the garments and also who lives at the said dwelling. Later admitted knowing about Jozef Zamkovsky and Stanislav Balaz. As far as the copying machine trade marked ASTRATHERM, he bought it from the salvage material and later loaned it to A. Glabasinov.

He refuses to give an opinion on the written material shown to him. The criminal charges against him considers as an attack against his religion and God.

In his defense the accused Anton Smid stated that he is unaware of any unlawful activity or breaking the law. Visitors coming to his house at 74 Na Krizovatkach were mostly relatives to attend various family affairs. He denies conducting any religious ceremony but admits to collective prayer. Does not know how the apparel for priests got to his house but it is possible that someone has brought them there on March 27, 1983. He has no knowledge about the church literature or the literature pertaining to the Cyrilo-Method Theological Faculty. He knows nothing about the concrete activity of the Order of St. Francis of Assisi, although was told by a father (Chrizostone) that this Order is prohibited. As far as his visits to the house for the retired is concerned, he was only helping out the various tasks. Vojtech Zlamal came to his house only as a friend. He does not know of any other reason why Zlamal came to Bratislava. He knew however that he was a member of the Order of St. Francis of Assisi and he may have been admitted into the novitiate on March 27, 1983. He refused any further comments connected with this case.

A number of other witnesses were interrogated during the investigation. Antonia Gabrisova testified that she was at the 74 Na Krizovatkach in the early morning hours for a morning prayer about March 27, 1983 because it was the Palm Sunday. At the said dwelling on religious holidays some 13–15 people attended regularly religiously services and the dates for further meeting were also determined. Witness Earnest Gubik testified that he knows about Jozef Barta's lecturing for the secret Order in Bratislava. He knows from Jozef Barta that "Father Ales" also lectured in Bratislava. His real name is Vojtech Zlamal. Witness Marian Labozicky knew Anton Smid in 1969 when they were altar boys in the "Blumenthal" church. Both visited the Home for the retired at Rusovska Cesta, Bratislava=Petržalka where at that time the Sisters of St. Francis were taking care of the retired. Has no knowledge about the accused being a member of the St. Francis Order. Witness Maria Majercakova described in greater detail the activity of the two accused as well as other members of the Order. She testified that both the accused together with Mirolslav Jachym travelled to the German Democratic Republic (N.D.R.) in December of 1980 and were ordained in the priesthood. After the return both celebrated their first mass in the basement at 5, Stanicna ulica wearing the priestly garments. She estimated that approximately 50 persons attended this ceremony, including relatives of the accused. As the first, secretly ordained, was Jaroslav Brazda. She testified further about the financial management of the Order. She was obliged to donate approximately 1,200 Kcs with 400 remaining for her own use—of her salary. After she made the pledge, her entire salary was being donated. Provided that several members of the Order lived in the building, one was always given the duty to shop and prepare meals. The local superior was in charge of all finances. The donations were used to buy food, clothing. He testified that also houses we bought for the Order. As for Peter Rucka, he after becoming a priest, held regularly religious services at 5 Stanicna ulica. Similarly, Antonon Smid served masses at 74 Na Krizovatkach every day at 5:00 a.m., or later, before going to work. She knows that he also was educating children, however, she does not know exactly where. In the testimony she named several other locations in Bratislava that are used for religious purposes.

Witness Stefan Nahlik testified that he entered the Order in 1974 with the accused Peter Rucka and Anton Smid. They were admitted by Vojtech Zlamal. He described in detail the structure of the Order of St. Francis of Assisi. He said that the secret theological faculties of the Order are on the level of theological faculties in the CSSR. The system and examinations were similar to the other universities. The study was divided into semesters. The priests were ordained in the N.D.R. The material for study was obtained by copying either on typewriters or copying. The religious literature was also brought from aboard—Rome, through MLR (Hungarian Peoples Republic) together with Peter Rucka he brought literature from East Germany and Poland and also religious objects in greater quantities. With Peter Rucka he participated at the weekly religious exercises in Poland and submitted photographs as proof. The witness testified further, although he does not recall the exact dates, but possibly in 1974–1975 when MUDr. Silvester Kromery lectured on how to behave during an interrogation by the Security Police in case that is discovered. Later they received these instructions translated into Czech. In a subsequent testimony he said that the literature was brought by Vojtech Zlamal, Jozef Barta and Joachym. In case of shortages, the material was copied by typewriter and Peter Rucka, who worked in the Polygraphic Works copied this material with the help of one of the co-workers.

Witness Anna Manlikova could not add anything new to her testimony, except that she found out that both were ordained into the priesthood. She said, however, that she was a candidate member in the congregation of "Skolske Sestry". Upon admittance she made a donation of 15,000.00 Kcs and later her entire monthy wage.

As she did not have the necessary education, she could not study religion. She had to perform manual labor so that the other students had more time to devote to studies within the congregation. Because of the differences between her and those who were studying, not having the necessary qualifications, she left the congregation. She confirmed that lecturers were Jozef Barta, Vojtech Zlamal et al. They also held religious services and gave confessions in the rooms at 74 Na Krizovatkach.

As to the defense of Anton Smid that he has no knowledge about the priestly apparel found in his house, it is contrary to the opinion of criminological investigation (N. 1.222 etc.) which introduced evidence that on one of the garment with yellow lining and on a white shirt were found hairs morphologically same as of the accused.

The defense of Rucka, concerning the copier ASTRATHERM, saying that he purchased the machine from salvage materials, in Bratislava as scrap iron, was checked with the plant director, collective Zberne suroviny (c.1.67), and accordingly, they do not sell machines of this type to manufacturers or to private individuals.

[From the Congressional Record, May 25, 1983]

Mr. PELL. Mr. President, today I am introducing a concurrent resolution condemning infringement of religious freedom, persecution of religious believers, and discrimination on religious grounds by the governments of the Warsaw Pact states.

As a member and former cochairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe—the Helsinki Commission, I have long been concerned about the failure of the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies to fulfill commitments on religious freedom undertaken in the Helsinki Final Act and to respect international law on human rights, especially in the area of religion. As signatories of the Final Act, they have pledged to "recognize and respect the freedom of the individual to profess and practice, alone or in community with others, religion or belief acting in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience." Despite this solemn pledge, the Warsaw Pact states severely restrict religious activities and practices by law and impede the exercise of religious freedom through control over the affairs of religious bodies including seminaries, religious publications and materials, construction and restoration of church buildings, finances, and the selection of religious leaders. Moreover, those individuals who attempt to exercise religious freedom are subject to state-sponsored discrimination in employment, housing, and education and in some states, for example Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, they are heinously persecuted and often imprisoned.

In recent years, the situation of clergy and religious believers has grown worse, particularly in Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. As a Foreign Service officer in Czechoslovakia shortly after the Communist coup of 1948, I saw first hand what an important role religion played in the lives of the people of Czechoslovakia. Today, approximately 75 percent of the people belong to the Roman Catholic Church, which is well established in Slovakia, the eastern region of Czechoslovakia. Catholicism is the root of nationalism in Czechoslovakia, and the Slovaks, like the Poles, actively pursue a religious life. Many of the remaining 25 percent, the ethnic Czechs in particular, embrace Protestantism. Religious believers who are not Roman Catholic or Protestant follow a variety of faiths including Greek Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Judaism. Although there are some 18 religious sects in Czechoslovakia, the Mormon Church and the Jehovah's Witnesses have been outlawed because they refuse to swear allegiance to the state.

The regime, which came to power in the wake of the heinous invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, has waged a continual campaign to minimize the role of religion in Czecholslovakia. Although the campaign has been directed at all sects, the Catholic Church has been the regime's primary target.

Catholic priests and lay believers have been subjected to house searches, harassment, detention, arrests, and imprisonment. With the birth of Solidarity in Poland, the campaign against Catholics intensified. For example, in April 1982 Father Joseph Barta received an 18-month sentence allegedly for "obstructing state supervision of the churches." The charge stemmed from a search of his home in November 1980 during which 70 religious items were confiscated by the police. Father Barta died before being transferred from his place of detention to prison. In February 1982, Father Gabriel Povala of Slovakia was imprisoned for 8 months on the charge that he tried to influence young people to lead more religious lives. In August 1982, the government interrogated some 150 young Catholics in Bratislava for a period of 8 to 11 hours each and detained some of them without charge. In March of this year, the government cracked down on members of the Franciscan Order through house searches, interrogations, and arrests. In response to this outrageous treatment, 85 Catholic priests, nuns and laymen in Slovakia sent a letter of protest to President Gustav Husak on April 15, 1983.

In addition to persecuting Catholic priests and believers, the Czechoslovak Government for the past 10 years has refused to reach agreement with the Vatican on candidates for the priesthood. Reportedly, there are now 1,000 Catholic parishes without priests in Czechoslovakia. Under these circumstances, many priests are forced to practice without licenses. The Government has waged an ongoing propaganda campaign against the "secret church"—that is, Catholic priests and bishops who have not been approved by the state but are sanctioned and "blessed" by the Vatican and conduct services in private.

The intensity and breadth of the campaign against Catholics suggests that the Government of Czechoslovakia genuinely fears that the Catholic Church has the potential to develop the kind of political influence in Czechoslovakia that it now has in Poland. Just as the Polish Government has tried to force the Polish Catholic Church to support governmental policies, so the Government of Czechoslovakia has tried to undermine the appeal of the Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia by forcing Catholic priests to join a pro-Government organization known as "Pacem in Terris." Although this strategy has not been successful, the Czechoslovak Government continues its antireligious campaign against not only Catholics but also other religious believers, no doubt in an attempt to blot religion out of Czechoslovak life.

Since 1980 the Soviet Union has stepped up its campaign against religious believers, particularly Catholics in Lithuania and Soviet Jews. With respect to Catholics, the Soviet Government, like its counterpart in Prague, appears to be worried about religious infection from Poland. The opportunity for Jews in the Soviet Union to profess and practice their religion freely is extremely limited. There are only 60 synagogues for some 2½ million Jews who live in the Soviet Union and less than five rabbis to serve them. There are no Jewish periodicals and a Hebrew Bible has not been published in the Soviet Union for 60 years. Moreover, Jewish activists who have attempted to organize unofficial Jewish religious study groups have been subjected to threats of arrests, harassment, house searches, surveillance and other forms of intimidation. The Soviet Government also engages in an intense anti-Semitic propaganda campaign which is both anti-Jewish and anti-Judaic in character.

Mr. President, freedom of religion is a fundamental freedom which must be guaranteed to every individual. Our own country was born out of the struggle for religious freedom and I believe, as Americans, that we have a sacred duty to do all that we can to achieve this important freedom for the people of the Warsaw Pact States. The resolution which I am introducing today, not only expresses our outrage at the failure of the Warsaw Pact States to fulfill their commitments in this area but also calls upon all branches of the U.S. Government to raise this issue publicly and privately at every appropriate forum.

[Transcript]

THE OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY, BRATISLAVA I—Bratislava, December 14, 1982

Presents accusation of Helena Gondova, born 6/20/1949 in Hrinova, living in Bratislava, Podhorskeho ul. 6, special referent of the Technical communication center Bratislava, in detention since August 12, 1982; and Frantisek Novajovsky, born 4/22/1956 in Spisska Bela, living in Spisska Bela, district Poprad, Petzvalova 48, in transit without reporting in Bratislava, Ludove Nam. No. 10, worker in Bratislava construction enterprise n.p. Bratislava, in detention since August 31, 1982.

In the sense that—

Accused Helena Gondova

I. Hostile to the socialist community and state establishment of the Republic during 1978 through 1982, until her detention assembled in her apartment in Bratislava, Podhorskeho ul. No. 6 considerable amount of books with the intent of distributing them, books that were mostly published abroad and were brought into CSSR illegally, further writings, which were copied and distributed, tape recordings containing gross accusations slanted against the social and state establishment of the Republic, against the alliance of the Republic with other states, especially with the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, which material was confiscated; during the period between 1978-1982 until her detention as a graduate of the Cyrilo-Methodian theological faculty in Olomouc and as an active believer, without the consent of the State and without taking an oath, she engaged in a spiritual and preaching activity, she congregated with religious persons whom she instructed in lay apostolate, which activity is not permitted by the State, she obtained, assembled and distributed religious literature, published abroad and brought into CSSR without permission, and distributed it among members of the lay church.

The accused Frantisek Novajovsky

I. As hostile towards the socialist, social and state establishment of the Republic during the period 1979-1982 until his detention in Bratislava, Ludove nam. No. 10, who accumulated, kept and distributed a great number of books, tape recordings, published and made abroad, writings copied in many various ways, containing gross accusations slanted against the social and state establishment of the Republic, as well as against the alliance and friendly relations with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and with other socialist states, and part of this material he gave to Vladimir Scigulinsky.

II. As a deeply religious person of the Roman Catholic faith in the period from 1979 to 1982 until his detention he, together with other religious persons, acted without state permission and oath, engaged in spiritual and preaching activities and to this purpose acquired and stored in his apartment on Ludove nam. No. 10, copied and distributed religious literature brought illegally into CSSR, tape recordings with religious content and also writings directed against socialist and state establishment of CSSR and of other socialist countries, thus—

The accused Helena Gondova

In point I: through her acts dangerous to the society in providing these means, was out of sheer hostility towards the socialist social and state establishment of the Republic in the process of inciting at least 2 persons against the socialist, social and state establishment of the Republic, against the alliance of the Republic with other states, and she committed this act using press and other similarly effective means.

In point II: with her intent to obstruct effectiveness of the state control over the church, she encroached upon the ruling of the law concerning the economic support of the church and of religious societies.

The accused Frantisek Novajovsky

In point I: through his acts dangerous to the society, which were directly aimed to committing a criminal act, out of hostility towards the socialist, social and state establishment of the Republic, tried to incite at least 2 persons to unruliness against the social and state establishment of the Republic, against the alliance of the Republic with other states, and he committed this act in using the press and other similarly effective means.

In point II: with the intent to obstruct the effectiveness of the state control of the church, he encroached against the ruling of the law concerning economic support of the church and of religious societies.

REASONS

The investigation that was carried out established the facts indicated in the above part of the accusation. The accused Helena Gondova completed her studies at the Cyrilo-Methodian faculty in Olomouc, destined for formation of men in priesthood. A woman cannot become a priest in the Roman Catholic Church, however she can after completing her studies work in church offices. The accused assumed a civilian profession, and settled down in Bratislava where she actively got involved in lay apostolate and carried out religious educational and preaching activites, without the consent of the State and without oath. From 1978 until her detention she procured religious literature published abroad and imported to Czechoslovakia without permit. She stored and prepared for dissemination literature of religious character and other writings as well as tape recordings destined by their content for spiritual exercises in religion and activities of lay apostolate. Writings have been copied either on typewriters or cyclostiles or mimeograph machines etc. These together with tape recordings were destined for spiritual exercises. The accused also procured, stored, copied books and writings containing gross accusations slanted against the State, against the social order, against the Republic's alliances with other States, which she prepared for dissemination among the lay members of the church and which were confiscated during the house search.

The accused stated for her defense, that she is innocent, that the books and copied writings and tape recordings she had only for her own needs. This defense is not acceptable because these materials were found in her possession during the house search in such quantities, which necessarily exceeds her needs in the type of materials, and is clear that they were destined for distribution among lay believers. The content of these books, writings and recordings is not only religious but contains also gross accusations slanted against socialists, social and state order as well as the Republic's alliances. Some books, copied writings or tape recordings were found also in the possession of the witnesses Mr. and Mrs. Scigulinsky, whom the accused, as was proved, knew and had contact with.

The accused Frantisek Novajovsky as a strongly religious person of Roman Catholic faith has attempted several times to be admitted to study at the Cylilo-Methodian theological faculty and already in his youth had actively learned the principles of teaching of religion. From 1979 until his detention, he procured, accumulated and disseminated materials of religious character in order to prepare other persons for the lay activity of the church, as well as materials containing gross accusations slanted against the social and state order of the Republic and against the relationships of alliance with Soviet Union and other Socialist States. This comprised books, tape recordings and different copied writings. He also carried out without the State's consent or oath, spiritual and preaching activity. From the accumulated materials, destined for the lay apostolate of the church, and having religious but also libellous content he gave copies to Vladimir Scigulinsky, or acquainted him with them.

The accused Frantisek Novajovsky stated in his defence only that he did not commit any criminal act nor did he do anything which is in conflict with paragraph 178 of the Penal Code. This defence of the accused, besides other proofs, is negated by the results of the house search on August 30, 1982 during which a large number of writing paper was confiscated together with bottles with fluid, staplers, paper-cutting instruments, a large quantity of binding instruments and also prepared wrapping paper for copied writings. The criminal activity of the accused is proved by statements of witnesses, results of house searches, documents, expert opinions, and proofs included in materials of the protocols of investigation. Statements of some witnesses (Dr. Sladkovicova and Gregorova) however have to be considered in the light of the so-called "instructions" secretly prepared, copied and disseminated with the copied writings, which were confiscated during the house search from the accused Gondova—since the accused as well as some witnesses fully followed in their testimony these "instructions".

They committed the accused Helena Gondova

With respect to point 1: attempt to the penal act of inciting to unruliness according to paragraph 7 subparagraph 1 k par. 100 supar. 1 letter a/c/ letter a of the Penal Code.

With respect to point 2: penal act of impairing the supervision of churches and religious societies according to par. 178 of the Penal Code.

The accused Frantisek Novajovsky

With respect to point 1: attempt to the penal act of inciting to unruliness according to par. 8 subpar. 1 k par. 100 supar. 1 letter a/c/ subpar. 3 letter a of the Penal Code.

With respect to point 2: penal act of impairing the supervision of churches and religious institutions according to par. 178 of the Penal Code.

Basing myself on the results of the investigation, I judge the activities of accused Gondova with respect to first point of accusation as a preparation to penal act of incitement to unruliness according to par. 7, subpar. 1 k, par. 100, subpar. 1, letter (a), (c) subpar. 3 letter (a) of the Penal Code and with respect to point 2 of the accusation as a penal act of impairment of the supervision of churches and religious communities according to par. 178 of Penal Code. Activities of the accused Novajovsky I judge with respect to the point 1 of the accusation as an attempt to Penal Act of incitement of unruliness according to par. 8 subpar. 1 k letter (a), (c) and par. 3 letter (a) of the Penal Code and with respect to point 2 according to par. 178 of the Penal Code.

The activities of the accused represent high danger to the society, because due to hostility to the socialist and state order, their activities were a preparation, or an attempt, to incite unruliness against socialist and social order of the Republic as well as against the relationship of alliance, and with these negative activities incite religiously inclined people toward hostility against the Republic and its interests. Their activities impaired the orderly process of state administration in that they interfered with the supervision of the church.

The accused Helena Gondova was not yet subject to any penal punishment. Her employer considers her as an independent employee with initiative. She carried her duties in an exemplary manner and she had a good reputation according to the opinion of the national council in the place of her domicile. Nor has she committed any trespasses.

The accused Frantisek Novajovshy has not yet been subject to any punishment. He has carried out his duties satisfactorily according to the statement of his employer and the local national council in Spisska Bela expressed its view that the whole family enjoys a good reputation.

The above indicated reasons justify the submission of accusation.

For the main proceedings I propose the following: 1. To call and interrogate Ing. Holly at number 1278; J. Hlinicky, number 1281; Mudr. Oveskova, number 1294; Ing. Safarova, number 1299; Ing. Scigulinska, number 1305; V. Scigulinsky, number 1312; M. Sladkovicova, number 1341; Ing. Sujova, number 1344; J. Sisolak, number 1362; Ing. Valentovicova, number 1374; M. Slezakova, number 1392; Mudr. Sladkovicova, number 1394.

2. To communicate the content of this accusation.

TIBOR SZAKAL,
Regional Procurator,

[Transcript]

Administration of Land Security Division for Bratislava and the Western Slovak district.

Department of Investigation of the State Security—Bratislava, November 18, 1982.

DECISION

According to paragraph 163, subpar, 1,44 of the Penal Proceedings, I prosecute:

Accused Novajovsky, Frantisek, born April 22, 1956 in Spisska Bela; citizen of Czechoslovakia of Slovak nationality; single; employed as a laborer in the Bratislava Construction Enterprise; Onduvska Street; domiciled in Spisska Bela, Pecvalova Street 48; living unreported in Bratislava, Ludove Nam. No. 10; at present, in prison in Bratislava.

Also of an attempt of the penal act of incitement to unruliness according to par. 8/lk, 100/a/,c/ subpar. 3a of the Penal Code; because according to established facts a conclusion is justified that the above mentioned, because of hostility to socialist social and state order of the Republic in the course of the years 1979 through 1982 until his detention in Bratislava, Ludove Nam. No. 10, stored a large number of books, magnetophone recordings made abroad, and copies of writings made in various manner with an antistate and politically objectionable content destined to incitement to unruliness against the socialist social and state order of the Republic as well as relationships of friendship and alliance with the Soviet Union and other Socialist states, from which materials he gave some to Vladimir Scigulinsky and other persons, and these materials were confiscated at the house search of the above mentioned.

JUSTIFICATION

The accused Novajovsky, Franktisek is prosecuted by the prosecutor of State Security, Land Security Division for Bratislava and for the Western Slovak District, for a penal act of obstructing the control of churches and religious societies according to par. 178 of the Penal Code. During the investigation of his criminal activities, his home on Ludove Nam. No. 10, where the accused lived without official registration, was searched and a substantial amount of books, tape recordings, originally from abroad, writings in great quantities, copied in various ways and whose contents were subversive and against the socialist social and state establishment of the Republic and against the alliance with USSR and with other socialist states, were confiscated. From the printed material, whose content is subversive, the accused gave to the witness Vladimir Scigulinsky material entitled "20 + 10 years after", copied from the original by Anton Hlinka, also accused, who taped sermons with subversive contents for the above mentioned witness, also protest songs by singer "KRILA" whose contents are directed against socialist social and state establishment and against the alliance relations of the Republic towards USSR and towards other socialist countries.

From the written materials confiscated during the search of his home and from the testimony of the witness Vladimir Scigulinsky it follows that the accused through his behavior committed an attempt of a panel act of subversion, because he tried through other effective means, as for instance through duplicated writings, tape recordings directed towards this purpose, harboured and distributed, to publicly incite people to unruliness against socialist social, state establishment of the Republic and against the allied and friendly relations with the Soviet Union and with other socialist states.

In view of the mentioned facts the conclusion that the accused through his acts committed an attempt of a penal act of subversion, according to paragraphs 8/1 k 100/1 letter a/,c/,subpar. 3, letter a/ of the Penal Code, is sufficiently justified and therefore the decision to pass sentence for the mentioned penal act is valid.

Memorandum: It is possible to appeal against this decision within 3 days of the delivered proclamation, which is to be presented to the interrogator of the State Security.

The appeal does not have a delaying effect.

PINNEL MIKULAS,
First Lieutenant,
Interrogator of the State Security.

(1) The functions of a clergyman, preacher or the like, can be exercised only by persons who have the corresponding state approval and have taken an oath. The State determines the wording of this oath by decree.

(2) Each designation election or appointment, of these persons requires prior approval by the State.

(Declaration on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief.)

Proclaims this Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.

ARTICLE 1

1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have a religion or whatever belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.
2. No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have a religion or belief of his choice.
3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

ARTICLE 2

1. No one shall be subject to discrimination by any State, institution, group of persons, or person on grounds of religion or other beliefs.

2. For the purposes of the present Declaration, the expression "intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief" means any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on religion or belief and having as its purpose or as its effect nullification or impairment of the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis.

ARTICLE 3

Discrimination between human beings on grounds of religion or belief constitutes an affront to human dignity and a disavowal of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and shall be condemned as a violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and enunicated in detail in the International Covenants on Human Rights, and as an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations between nations.

ARTICLE 4

1. All States shall take effective measures to prevent and eliminate discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in the recognition, exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms in all fields of civil, economic, political, social and cultural life.

2. All States shall make all efforts to enact or rescind legislation where necessary to prohibit any such discrimination, and to take all appropriate measures to combat intolerance on the grounds of religion or other beliefs in this matter.

ARTICLE 5

1. The parents or, as the case may be, the legal guardians of the child have the right to organize the life within the family in accordance with their religion or belief and bearing in mind the moral education in which they believe the child should be brought up.

2. Every child shall enjoy the right to have access to education in the matter of religion or belief in accordance with the wishes of his parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, and shall not be compelled to receive teaching on religion or belief against the wishes of his parents or legal guardians, the best interests of the child being the guiding principle.

3. The child shall be protected from any form of discrimination on the ground of religion or belief. He shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace and universal brotherhood, respect for freedom of religion or belief of others, and in full consciousness that his energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his fellow men.

4. In the case of a child who is not under the care either of his parents or of legal guardians, due account shall be taken of their expressed wishes or of any other proof of their wishes in the matter of religion or belief, the best interests of the child being the guiding principle.

5. Practices of a religion or beliefs in which a child is brought up must not be injurious to his physical or mental health or to his full development, taking into account article 1, paragraph 3, of the present Declaration.

ARTICLE 6

In accordance with article 1 of the present Declaration, and subject to the provisions of article 1, paragraph 3, the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief shall include, *inter alia*, the following freedoms:

(a) To worship or assemble in connexion with a religion or belief, and to establish and maintain places for these purposes;

(b) To establish and maintain appropriate charitable or humanitarian institutions;

(c) To make, acquire and use to an adequate extent the necessary articles and materials related to the rites or customs of a religion or belief;

(d) To write, issue and disseminate relevant publications in these areas;

(e) To teach a religion or belief in places suitable for these purposes;

(f) To solicit and receive voluntary financial and other contributions from individuals and institutions;

(g) To train, appoint, elect or designate by succession appropriate leaders called for by the requirements and standards of any religion or belief;

(h) To observe days of rest and to celebrate holidays and ceremonies in accordance with the precepts of one's religion or belief;

(i) To establish and maintain communications with individuals and communities in matters of religion and belief at the national and international levels.

ARTICLE 7

The rights and freedoms set forth in the present Declaration shall be accorded in national legislation in such a manner that everyone shall be able to avail himself of such rights and freedoms in practice.

ARTICLE 8

Nothing in the present Declaration shall be construed as restricting or derogating from any right defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights.

[Adopted unanimously by the General Assembly of the United Nations on Dec. 15, 1982.]

[The Supreme Court, Slovak Socialist Republic, Bratislava, Mar. 3, 1982]

Jozef Labuda, Emilia Kesegova—complaint concerning violation of the law Exhibit: Record of the District Court in Rimavska Sobota, sp. zan. 4 T 259/80.

According to par. 266 section 1,2 Penal Procedure in the period prescribed by par. 272 Penal Procedure I appeal the decision of the District Court in Rimavska Sobata sp. zan. 4 T 259/70 and the decision of the Regional Court in Banska Bystrica dated October 27, 1981 c.k. # To 492/31-136 as this decision violated the provision of par. 270 section 4, par. 253 section 1, letter b/d/par. 259 section 3 and par. 226 letter b/ Penal Procedure in favor of the accused Jozef Labuda and Emilia Kesegova.

I justify the complaint as follows:

With the sentence of the District Court in Rimavska Sobota, dated October 30, 1980 c.k. 4 T 259/80-;93, the accused Jozef Labuda was found guilty of criminal activity by hindering the surveillance of the State over the churches and religious institutions according to par. 173 of the Penal Code and the accused Emilia Kesegova for collaboration in this criminal act according to par. 10, section 1, letter a/, par. 178 of the Penal Code based on factual evidence that,

"The accused Jozef Labuda registered in the town of Kyjatice from August 18 to the 21st of 1980 conducted revival services for seven participants who were at the cottage for the expressed purpose, although he was fully aware that such services are banned outside of religious institutions and aside from that on August 18, 1980 he celebrated a mass for them in the church in Tisovec for which he needed a special permit which he did not request.

The accused Emilia Kesegova, registered in the town of Kyjatice from August 8 to the 21st of 1980 organized in the cottage of Jozef Sedliak for seven participants a meeting for religious purposes and also, organized the daily activity, took care of food and for the purpose of religious services invited also Jozef Labuda, a Roman Catholic priest, who without the permission performed the religious services and also celebrated a mass for them on August 8, 1980 in the church in Tisovec, which is not allowed outside of religious structures, while to serve a mass he needed the necessary special permit, which he did not request".

For this the accused Jozef Labuda was sentenced to 6 months and Emilia Kesgova to 4 months and both were sent to the First Correction-Educational Group with the loss of civil liberties.

According to par. 73, section 1, letter c/ of the Penal Code the court ruled to confiscate articles entered as evidence and put to safekeeping of the District Procuratura in Rimavska Sobota under log 1-12 in the book as evidence under c/3/80.

The defendants appealed the decision of the Regional Court in Banska Bystrica which ruled in January 27, 1981 c.k. 8 To 565/80-117 according to par. 257 lettero/ Criminal Procedure and repealed the decision of the District Court in its entirety according to par. 222 section 2, of the Penal Procedure forwarded this case for further court action to the ONV (District People's Committee) in Nitra as a violation according to par. 6 section 1, Legal Code c. 60/1961.

On July 17, 1981 I appealed the decision of the Regional Court in Banska Bystrica under No. 110/31-3/t for the violation of the law.

As a result of this appeal, the Supreme Court of the SSR has ruled on August 13, 1981, c.k. 4 To 48/81 that the decision of the District Court in Banska Bystrica on January 27, 1981, c.k. 8 To 565/80-117 violated provisions of the law in par. 3, section 6, par. 257 letter a/ par. 222, section 2 of the Penal Code and par. 6, section 1, statute c. 60/4961 of the Code, in favor of the two accused and ordered the District Court in Banska Bystrica to review its decision and to rule accordingly.

The Supreme Court of the Slovak Socialist Republic, after reviewing the evidence, expressed the opinion that the accused Jozef Labuda and Emilia Kesegova acted contrary to the law.

Contrary to the legal opinion expressed by the Supreme Court of the SSR, in regard to said decision, the District Court in Banska Bystrica on October 27, 1981, c.k. 8 To 432/81-146, and without further investigation to obtain further evidence required by par. 258, section 1, letter b/d/ of the Penal Code, ruled against the decision of the District Court in Rinavska Sobota reached on October 30, 1980, c.k. 4 T 259/80-93 and guided by par. 259, section 3 of the Penal Code, acquitted the accused Jozef Labuda and Emilia Kesegova according to par. 226, letter b of the Penal Code releasing them from the accusation of the District Procurator in Rimavska Sobota.

This decision of the District Court in Banska Bystrica violated the law.

According to par. 270, section 4 of the Penal Code the organ, to whom this matter was referred to, is obligated to process the instructions expressed in the opinion of the Supreme Court.

The District Court ignored this provision and without any change in the evidence and contrary to the ruling of the Supreme Court of the SSR persisted in its original decision stating that the accused were guilty only of par. 6, section 1, statute c. 60/961 of the Code and because of the statute of limitation of one year was forced to acquit them.

The District Court, as it is evident from its decision, considered the same evidence as the Supreme Court of the SSR who accordingly found the accused guilty of the offense. In spite of that the District Court "could not abide" by the ruling of the Supreme Court of the SSR because the evidence does not substantiate charges brought against the accused by the District Procurator.

It is obvious that the decision of the District Court in Banska Bystrica is in violation of the provisions in the law and in the favorable ruling of the accused Jozef Labuda and Emilia Kesegova. I propose, therefore, that the Supreme Court of the Slovak Socialist Republic:

1. states that acccording to the par. 268, section 2 of the Penal Code, the District Court in Banska Bystrica by its favorable decision of October 27, 1981, c.k. 8 To 482/81-146 was in violation of the law, par. 270, section 4; par. 258, section 1, letters b/d/. par. 259, section 3, par. 226, letter b/ of the Penal Code.
2. repeals the commutation according to par. 269, section 2, of the Penal Code.
3. according to par. 270, sections 1, 3 of the Penal Code orders the District Court in Banska Bystrica to review and decide the case using other court personnel.

This is in the competence of the Supreme Court of the Slovak Socialist Republic according to the provision of par. 266a of the Penal Code.

Attested to: Illegible signature.

The Ministry of Justice,
Slovak Socialist Republic vz. JUDr.
Gaspar KUBEK, v.r.
Round rubber stamp,
Ministry of Justice Slovak Socialist
Republic.

[Imprisonment]

CHARGE

The District Procurator in Dolny Kubin brings charges against Jozef Gazda, born 12. 16, 1933 in Huty, residing in the same city at house number 80, district Lipt. Mikulas, last employment as a store-keeper, single, presently in detainment, to wit:

As a former Roman Catholic clergyman, forbidden to perform religious activity by the District People's Committee in Lipt. Mikulas, spitefully maintained this activity at his brother's residence, where he was educating children and performed the same activity in his own house in Huty. There he celebrated masses and held spiritual revivals and also celebrated masses for the Sisters of the Order at the institute for social welfare in Smrecany. This activity he maintained from 1971 up to the detainment.

Thus with the intent to hinder or to make it more difficult for the State to maintain the surveillance over the Church or religious society, violated the laws pertaining to the economic security of churches and religious societies.

Thus committed a criminal act of hindering surveillance over the churches and religious societies according to par. 178 of the Penal Code.

PARTICULARS

The accused Jozef Gazda functioned as a Roman Catholic official in the vicinity of Smrecin. On September 28, 1971 by the ruling of the District People's Committee in Lipt. Mikulas he was forbidden to continue the exercise of spiritual activity. This ruling was upheld by the Regional People's Committee in Banska Bystrica on October 19, 1971. The accused Gazda, in spite of the fact that the State took away his right to continue religious education, performed religious services at his brother's cottage. His brother, Bohumil Gazda, who lives in Oravice and whom the accused visited frequently, had his children educated in religion. On numerous occasions, children of other citizens, living close by, also attended these lectures. Namely children of Rastislav Hunat and Milna Singer, both of them testifying that in addition to the interpretation of religious dogmas he also projected motion pictures with religious topics. He also gave tests. On these occasions he always wore religious garments. It was further found that he and his brother Bohumil built a cottage in the town of Huty and furnished it to accommodate religious services as it is contained in the enclosure 79-86. He celebrated masses for other citizens and acquaintances from the village. He also held spiritual revivals. Miss Salisova confirmed her attendance and also of another young girl with whom she is not acquainted. It was further attested to by witnesses Rusinakova, Kralovicova, Cibulova and others that the accused at their request visited the Institute for Social Welfare in Smrecany, where he served masses and gave communion. For the serving of the masses he was remunerated.

DOCUMENT 1

BRATISLAVA, *December 4, 1978.*

Regional Administration ZNB,
Investigative Section of State Security,
c.j. CVS-69/1978.

DECISION

The General Procurator of the Slovak Socialist Republic on the appeal by Oskar Formánek, Ignác Jurusa and Mária Kožárová against the decision by the investigator of State Security KS-ZNB in Košice on November 16, 1978 c.j. CVS-69/1978 in virtue of which he decided to conduct a house search in the homes of the above mentioned persons.

The appeal is hereby rejected as without evidence according to Article 148, section one, letter c.

EVIDENCE

By the decision of the investigator of State Security KS-69/1978 in accordance with article 160, section 1 of the Criminal Code, criminal prosecution was begun because of the criminal act of frustating supervision over churches and religious associations according to article 178 of the Criminal Code. The factual basis for the prosecution is that on a day not specified precisely unknown transgressors were encouraging the former members of orders and monasteries suppressed in the past to engage in religious activities under the form of establishing the lay apostolate among young people. This activity is directed against the social and state order in the Czecho-Slovak Socialist Republic.

Through the investigation of this criminal matter a justified suspicion arose that Oskar Formánek, Ignác Jurusa, and Mária Kožárová stored in thier living quarters written material needed in order to establish the alleged criminal act. The investigator of the State Security Office in accordance with regulation article 83, section 1 decided to carry out a house-search in the quarters of the aforesaid persons. Against this decision by the investigator of the State Security Office Oskar Formánek and Mária Kožárová lodged an appeal, which except for Mária Kožárová was justified in writing.

After a study of the appeal against the decision of the investigator from the State Security Office and the report related to the matter, it was established that the appeal was unjustified. The investigator of the State Security Office had decided on the house-search in accordance with the law, and on the basis of an objectively justified suspicion, that the above-named did in fact retain in their quarters material important for the criminal prosecution and had refused to surrender it voluntarily. The correctness of the decision to conduct the house-search was justified when written material was found and seized for purposes of the criminal proceeding.

Since no grounds existed for reversal of the investigator's decision, the appeals of Oskar Formánek, Ignác Jurusa, and Mária Kožárová were rejected as unjustified.

Conclusion: The appeal agains this decision is not accepted.

JUDR. ŠUBERT,
General Procurator of the SSR.

Košice, February 12, 1979.

RESOLUTON

According to article 105, section 1 of the Criminal Code in the criminal proceeding against Oskar Formánek and his associates who are being prosecuted for criminal actions according to article 178 and 10 section 1, letter c and article 178 of the Criminal Law, in order to prepare a well qualified judgement I am inviting these experts: Doc. Tibor Malička Ph.D, Ján Bilas C.Sc., Ph.D., and Milan Sidor Ph.D. Researchers in the Pavol Šafárik University's Philosophical Faculty, and Chair of Philosophy and Scientific Atheism in Prešov.

For a well informed judgement it is necessary to analyse these written materials (religious literature issued abroad by church-related publishing houses and illegally brought into Czecho-Slovakia), that is, to judge this literature scientifically from the viewpoint of content and political intent.

JUSTIFICATION

The investigator is charging the accused Oskar Formánek with the criminal act of frustrating supervision over the churches and religious associations according to article 178 of the Criminal Code, and the accused Mária Kožárová as an accessory in the criminal act of frustrating supervison over churches and religious associations according to article 10, section 1, letter c and article 17 of the Criminal Code on the factual basis that the accused Oskar Formánek from 1972 down to the present time had conducted religious services in Prešov and surrounding area in conflict with law number 218/1949. Moreover, the accused had within the frame work of the lay apostolate prepared several religious meditations by using religious literature issued abroad by church-related publishers and brought illegally into Czechoslovakia. The accused Mária Kožárová had helped to make copies of this literature and distributed it among the citizens. In this way they both protested against the execution of state supervision over the churches and religious associations.

On the basis of the facts already introduced and on consideration of the regulation article 24, section 1, letter a of the law number 36/1967 it was necessary to decide the matter in the way in which it is presented in the verdict contained in this resolution.

Conclusion: Against this decision an appeal is permissible and can be presented for up to three days after receiving the decision from the investigator. The appeal does not have suspensive force (article 41, sections 2 and 3 of the Criminal Code.)

Investigator: Col. Stefan Fedor, in his own hand.

Košice,

KOŠICE, *April 25, 1979.*

c.j. CVS—69/1978.

DECISION

According to article 163, section 1 and section 4 of the Criminal Code, I am prosecuting as charged:

Oskar Formánek, born September 9, 1915 in Lysá pod Makytou, single, retired, resident in Prešov, Kotradova, Street number 4 and Mária Kožárová, born March 13, 1930 in Nizny Slávkov, single, a bookbinder employed in the district Enterprise of Communal Services in Prešov, resident in Prešov, Matica Slovenská Street, number 24 for cooperation in committing the crime of Provocation according to article 9, section 2 and article 100 section 1 letter a of the Criminal Law. On the basis of confirmed facts the conclusion is sufficiently justified that

Oskar Formánek and Mária Kožárová in a spirit of unfriendliness to the socialist social and state order of the Republic, from an unspecified date in 1969 to November 16, 1978, within the framework of initiating religious activities in Prešov and its surrounding area under the form of creative carrying on the lay apostolate affected the faithful negatively. Consequently they provided among the believers unfriendly attitudes against the Republic with their theses about lack of religious freedom and about the liquidation of the churches by the state as an official policy of the Czecho-Slovak Socialist Republic. Furthermore, to achieve this purpose they used various religious and anti-state writings which they obtained from capitalist countries abroad and copied and distributed among the believers. By this manner of action they evoked an unfriendly attitude toward the state and social order of the republic.

JUSTIFICATION

On November 11, 1978 the investigator of the State Security Office began a criminal prosecution according to article 160, section 1 of the Criminal Code against unknown persons for the criminal act of frustrating supervision over churches and religious organizations according to article 176 of the Criminal Law because on the basis of written materials sought by the organs of the Administration of State Security in Kosice it was clear that unknown persons from an unspecified date initiated and expanded religious activity even though they did not have state approval for such activity. In the course of the investigation it was proved that Oskar Formánek and Mária Kožárová carried out this activity and for this reason were charged with a criminal act according to article 168 of the Criminal Law.

Further investigation showed that the parties charged had by their cooperation provided the factual substance of the criminal act of Provocation according to article 100, section 1, letter a of the Criminal Law. Namely, from the year 1969 until November 11, 1978 in Prešov and the surrounding area within the framework of the lay apostolate and its activity they had deliberately influenced the believers unfavourably and evoked unfriendly attitudes against the state and social system of the republic through their theses about lack of religious freedom and about the liquidation of the churches as an official policy of the Czecho-Slovak Socialist Republic. Hence, under this guise they created and supported the lay apostolate in its activity and educated believers in the spirit that would make it possible for them to begin open legal activity should there be a change in political conditions. In order to influence believers they obtained illegal literature from capitalist countries abroad which included the goals of clerical anti-Communism, and attacks on the state and social order in the Czecho-Slovak Socialist Republic. The literature also contained the anti-state program of the Hlinka's People's Party emigres from the year 1948 and the emigres of 1968–1969 as well as other literature tendentious in purpose and directed against the interests of the socialist state. (See the minutes of the hearings of witnesses: A. Lesnik, M. Scerbov, Eng. T. Šesták, E. Basa, F. Alth and others who confirm the criminal activity of Oskar Formánek and Mária Kožárová). With regard to the decision on the prosecution of Oskar Formánek for a criminal act according to article 178 of the Criminal Code and Mária Kožárová for a criminal act according to article 10, section 1, letter c and article 178 of the Criminal Code of the date January 24, 1979, that decision remains in force.

On the basis of the facts introduced above, sufficient grounds exist for charging Oskar Formánek and Mária Kožárová with cooperation in the criminal act of Provocation according to article 9, section 2, and article 100, section 1, letter a of the Criminal Law

Hence, it was necessary to adjudicate the matter just as is indicated in the verdict contained in this decision.

Conclusion:

Against this decision an appeal is admissible. It can be lodged for three days after receipt of this decision from the investigator. The appeal does not have suspensive force.

A round seal: KSZNB—Investigative section of State Security, Košice 1. Col Stefan Fedor, in his own hand.

DOCUMENT 2

Regional Administration ZNB, Investigative Section of State Security,
c.j. CVS—69/1978

KOŠICE, *July 9, 1979.*

RESOLUTION

In the criminal proceeding against MUDr. Oliver Oravec according to regulation article 80, section 1 of the Criminal Code.

During a house-search of the home of MUDr. Oliver Oravec, born May 31, 1941 in Liptovský Mikuláš and a dentist of Czechoslovak Institute of Health with residence in Prešov, Clementis Street, number 3, the following objects were seized:

1. Four packages with four records with the following titles: Missae Gregorianae, Lourdes, Gregorian Chants, and Canzoni per l'assemlea dei Christiani.
2. One Record, Jesus Christ Superstar.
3. One savings deposit book in the name of Antonia Oravcová, number 33771, in the sum of 10,000 Czecho-Slovak crowns.
4. One "winning" deposit book in the name of Oliver Oravec, number 18872160 in the sum of 14,000 Czecho-Slovak crowns.
5. One typewriter, Continental S 23-G-3, serial number 3308439.

JUSTIFICATION

During the house search conducted on November 16, 1978 in the home of MUDr. Oliver Oravec, among other things the objects described above were seized and recorded as items 33, 35, 57, 58 and 62 of the protocol about the search in the quarters of MUDr. Oliver Oravec. In view of the fact that from the results of the investigation, the above objects clearly are no longer needed for evidence and that there is no doubt that they belong to the above named, it was required to decide about their return, just as happened above.

Conclusion: Against this decision an appeal is admissible and may be lodged up to three days after receiving this decision. The appeal does not have suspensive force (Article 80, section 3 of the Criminal Code.)

PRAGUE, May 20, 1979.

The Administration of the International Postal Service,
Prague 120 M. Gorky Square,
220 00 Prague 1.

SIR: We are informing you that the attached mail contained among other things this non-periodical publication: F. Lelotte, The Secrets of the Beauties of Life [Tajomstvo krásy života], Vol. 1-2.

The import and distribution of these non-periodical publications were forbidden by the decision of the Ministry of Culture, issued on the basis of article 4 of law number 94/1949 on the publication and distribution of books, music, and other periodical publications.

Therefore, the above mentioned non-periodical publications are excluded from postal delivery. The items excluded from postal delivery according to article 6, section 4 of governmental regulation number 240/1949 for the implementation of postal law, become property of the government.

With the greeting Peace to the world:

Col. Stefan Fidor, *Investigator.*

[From the Slovak Press Digest, February 1983]

NEW INITIATIVES OF THE SLOVAK SECRET POLICE (STB)

(By Anton Hlinka)

MUNICH.—According to German Catholic Press Service (KNA) of December 30, as reported from allegedly well informed circles in Bratislava, about 150 young people were interrogated in connection with Helena Gondova and Frantisek Novajovsky who have been detained for interrogation since August 13, respectively August 30, 1982. The State Security Organs (from now on STB) got their names from address books and correspondence confiscated from Gondova and Novajovsky. The news from Bratislava state that in spite of diverse tricky methods of interrogation, the STB wasn't able to get even from such a massive number of so-called witnesses any compromising material against the above mentioned accused.

The 150 young people under interrogation allegedly stated fearlessly and unanimously that the accused Gondova did not commit any criminal acts. Many of them commented that the harassment, questioning, discrimination and imprisonment of believers due to their religious activities are remindful of the dreadful fifties. When the police confronted them with a list of names and personal photographs, they refused to testify and invoked their civil rights. It is not known as yet whether the interrogators offered the questioned youth coffee, to which there is usually added "phsychofarmaka" to make them talk. The persons submitted to interrogation are usually "allergic" to these considerations of the police and refuse the offered "refreshment".

Concurrent with the Gondova and Novajovsky case, there is a regular offensive in progress in many parts of Slovakia against young believers. Their protagonists are special units of the secret service and their trained spies mostly from the ranks of university students.

The KNA of December 30, further says that according to news from Bratislava these assistants to secret service were trained in the U.S.S.R., an unprecedented occurence. About 500 students participated, mostly from Slovakia. Some of them did this for money, others were bought with promises of guaranteed degrees from the schools of their choice and with promises of good prespectives for the future. Most of the specialized training dealt with methods to discover youth circles. The participants practiced religious conversations and discussions which they were to use later to attract the attention of their colleagues/believers. Besides that they received training in church attendance and in pretending deep religious feelings. Their activities begin once they succeed to become members of a religious circle. Their task is two-fold: to inform and to desinform. For the latter they will receive later exact instructions applying to the specific circumstances of their situation, how to boycott unobtrusively youth movements among the believers and how to initiate provocations.

According to the news from Bratislava, reported in KNA, many prominent members of STB were—in compliance with orders from above—transferred to the offensive against young believers even though they never worked in that sector before.

This change was noticed by those believers activists who are often questioned by the police. They noticed new people and new techniques of interrogations. For instance comrade Schubert, active in the fifties in the court of Kosice, was transferred from Banska Bystrica to the general procurature as expert in fighting the lay apostulate. Another addition to the Bratislava STB is lawyer Opat. Vasil Bejda, head of the department of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party was put in charge of coordination of individual factors in the intensified fight against religion, from the mass communication to the interference by secret service. To perform this function, he received plenipotentiary powers and all necessary means were put at his disposal.

One of the first tasks of the reorganized sections of STB is to find out how does the news from the religious area reach foreign countries. The judges, the spies and even the secret agents themselves—in spite of false indentities—are very worried and nervous in their work when they learn that their names, activity and circumstances of their actions were registered somewhere abroad.

Another of their aims is to assess the scope of the religious activities in the land. Only when the authorities will have exact detailed information at hand will they be able to strike a blow.

The well informed circles in Bratislava learned from young people interrogated in different Slovak towns about the perfidious methods of interrogation of some persecuted people. To break down their resistance the interrogators use in a gradually increasing manner not only the factor of physical exhaustion—long interrogations, sleepless nights—but also certain chemicals.

According to all indications, the secret police does not realize that their actions and interference, and sometimes an occasional victory, will be just a Pyrhic victory. They will liquidate one believer and ten new believers will replace him. This is an experience as old as church, the community of believers.

[From the New York Tribune, June 13, 1983]

Czech Regime Hikes Religious Persecution

(By Z. Michael Szaz)

Communist regimes pay lip service to religious freedom. They pride themselves in East-Central Europe on paying a part-time salary to the Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant clergy, a custom dating back centuries in these countries.

The reality, however, is different. In every communist country, religious denominations have to be "licensed" by the state, and priests and ministers have to take a loyalty oath to the "socialist" state. The paltry salaries provided by the state are used to manipulate the clergy's freedom of expression administratively. Those who preach pious platitudes and fail to proselytize among the young are rewarded with plum parish assignments; those who resist wind up in a godforsaken village or in jail.

Even this state of affairs applies only in Poland or Hungary. In Romania, distributing Bibles or prayer books printed abroad is a punishable crime, and unlicensed Protestant ministers and Greek Uniate priests are sentenced to long prison terms.

WORST OFFENDER

But the worst offender against the freedom of religion (outside the Soviet Union) remains the Prague regime, which has been buttressed by the occupying Red Army since 1968. There has not been any of the relaxation that made life bearable in Hungary after the bloody communist revenge between 1957 and 1962.

Rather, persecution of the Roman Catholic Church is intensifying. Catholicism is the main religion in Czechoslovakia, but the resilience of the church in the Czech lands is not as strong as in Slovakia. The reason is that the church lost many followers for its past identification with the Hapsburgs in Bohemia and Moravia.

Historically, the Slovak priest of the village, or the parish priest in the town, was more the leader of the community than was any state official. The unity of the faithful and the clergy constitutes the biggest obstacle to Marxism-Leninism among the 4 million Slovaks.

Still, we hear almost nothing about them in the Western media. Many of the signers of Charta '77 were Slovaks and most of the religious resisters come from Slovakia. Two members of the Catholic lay apostolate were sentenced to jail in Bratislava (capital of Slovakia) recently for preaching Catholic ideas and distributing Catholic literature, while outside the courthouse demonstrators were saying the rosary aloud.

Twenty former Franciscan priests and brothers were recently arrested by the secret police and are being "interrogated."

DRUGGED AND BEATEN

The West German Catholic News Service reports that the secret police are using both physical beatings and psychedelic drugs served in coffee to extort confessions from believers.

The secret police, with substantial Soviet assistance, also are organizing their own "task force" among university students, who are being bribed with money, guaranteed degrees or jobs to infiltrate Catholic youth circles. These *agents provocateurs* receive training in church attendance and doctrine. Their main objective is to inform on the believers and spread disinformation and provocations among them.

One of the primary tasks is to find out how the news of religious persecution is leaked to the West. The secondary objective is to gauge religious activities so the secret police can take effective countermeasures.

The regime considers the Catholic Church, especially in Slovakia, its main enemy. Many of the bishoprics in Slovakia have not been filled since the late 1940s and church autonomy is a thing of the past. Yet outside of the intimidated clergy, lay people are taking over and providing support for those priests who persist in preaching the true Gospel.

Still, our media seem more interested in human rights "violations" amid a bloody civil war in El Salvador than about these violations of religious and human freedoms in Czechoslovakia.

BEHIND THE TIMES

Our State Department also seems behind the times with regard to Czechoslovakia. While Czechs and Slovaks have lived under a common roof since 1920, their geography, history and culture are quite different. (They lived for almost 1,000 years in the kingdom of Hungary).

There are 2 million American citizens of Slovak heritage—those who immigrated between 1939 and 1980 and their children. But the State Department still advises against presidential greetings to the conventions of any American Slovak organizations because "in doing so we would promote Slovak separatism."

Yet presidential greetings and invitations to State Department briefings are given routinely to the national organizations of almost every other ethnic group, including those, like the Ukrainians, who do not have a sovereign state of their own.

Thus, such recognition would not mean we are for an independent Slovakia, but rather would be a gesture toward the proud Slovak people who so grievously suffer for their belief in God and human freedom.

[From the Wall Street Journal, Aug. 15, 1983]

Pope John Paul II, Remarks at Lourdes, France

Today, besides prison, concentration camps, forced labor camps and expulsion from one's own country, there are other punishments less well known but more subtle: not violent death, but a kind of civil death; not only isolation in prisons or in camps, but social discrimination or permanent restriction of personal liberty.

There are today hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of witnesses to the Faith, all too often ignored or forgotten by public opinion whose attention is drawn elsewhere. They are often known to God alone. They suffer daily hardships in various parts of every continent.

They include believers forced to meet in hiding because their religious community is not legally authorized.

They include bishops, priests and religious who are forbidden to exercise their sacred ministry in churches or in public gatherings.

They include nuns who have been dispersed and cannot live their consecrated life.

They include generous young men who are prevented from entering a seminary or religious house of formation to pursue their vocation.

They include young women who are denied the possibility of consecrating themselves to a common life dedicated to prayer or to works of charity.

They include parents who are refused the right to have their children educated according to their faith.

They include men and women, manual workers, intellectuals, or those trying out other occupations who simply because they profess their faith, run the risk of being deprived of interesting opportunities for their careers or their studies.

To these cases can be added the serious and distressing condition of prisoners, internees and exiles, not only among Catholics and other Christians, but also among other believers (Cf, Redemptor Hominis, 17). Their plight is like a hymn which rises continually to God from the sanctuary of their conscience like a spiritual offering certainly pleasing to God.

Pacem in Terris

The "Trojan Horse" of communism within the Church is the peace-priest movement. It represents the height of manipulation on the part of communism and the powerlessness of those who do not hesitate to participate in church work in order to destroy it. The Pacem Movement was established by the State and the Secret Police recruited members and still solicits active clergy membership. The State draws up the statutes and the Federal Secretaries of Churches schedule the meetings, select the speakers and give outlines of texts. They organize discussions and draw up the final resolutions. Solely the national or international interests of the State are discussed, and the members draw richer financial remunerations. The first task of the Pacem Movement is to make the Soviet's efforts for peace look credible in the eyes of the western, foreign countries. The movement scandalizes the faithful, causes disunity among the clergy, and destroys the authority of the bishops. It is an anti-ecclesiastical clericalism, or, in other words, a proletarian clericalism where priests are court chaplains of godless rulers. In 1982 the Vatican congregation of clergy forbade all priests to participate in movements of political character. A letter from the Cardinal Prefect of the congregation to Cardinal Tomasek made it clear that this decree applied specifically to "Pacem in Terris." This action set the government on a warpath. The Pope has been villified in the press, the government interrupted negotiations with the Vatican for the appointment of new bishops and dark threats were circulated of establishing of a national Catholic Church free of the reactionary Rome working against the peace efforts. Secretary gives or denies permission to celebrate masses, to hear confessions, to preach or to visit the sick. Cardinals Konig of Vienna, Bengsch of Berlin and Woytila of Warsaw (the present pope) could not officially participate in the funeral service of Cardinal Trochta because the Secretary of Churches refused permission. Protestant ministers require permission for someone from the congregation to read the scriptures or assist at the communion service.

PHYSICAL LIQUIDATION

During the last decade Slovakia repeatedly witnessed cases of organized lynchings of priests in addition to various other forms of intimidation. As the Western press reported, in numerous cases priests were suddenly attacked in their homes, usually at night, by "unknown persons" whose identity has never been established. Thus, Rev. Alojz Tkac, parish priest of Christ the King Church at Kosice, was attacked by several men when after evening Mass he passed through a dark street. Only by chance was he saved. At a convention of the Pacem in Terris movement he dared to criticize the massive pressure against Religion. Today the "laicized" Reverend Tkac works as a conductor on a streetcar.

Similarly, the Salesian Anton Srholec was attacked at night. Two men and a woman rang the doorbell pretending they wanted a child baptized secretly. When he opened the door, the men attacked and overpowered him. Only his loud cries, which brought people to his aid, saved him.

The same happened to Rev. Anton Michalek, pastor at Precin near Povazska Bystrica. He suffered the same fate. Inside his house he was beaten and stabbed with a knife. He was found lying in a pool of blood and rushed to the hospital by some people on the following morning.

At the end of February 1977, Rev. Jaroslaw Rusnak was murdered in his parish home at Trnava. The police gave as the reason for his sudden death "accidental gas poisoning." But the parishioners established this as impossible after they inspected the house immediately after his death.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DESTRUCTION

Recently a new method has been applied. In the fall of 1977, Bishop Julius Gabris, while in Rome, heedless of the consequences, had spoken clearly and realistically of the possibilities of evangelization of his country. Hardly had he returned, he was summoned to appear before the Minister of Cults, Karol Homola. Reproaches were heaped upon him. He was accused of spreading "lies" in Rome about the situation in the CSSR. The exhausting length of the interrogation, the undue vehemence of Homola, punctuated with threats and rude, uncouth remarks caused the diabetic bishop to have a heart attack, necessating immediate hospitalization.

The world will always remember the untimely deaths of Cardinal Trochta in April 1974, and of the philosopher, Jan Patocka, in March 1977, both as result of mental torture. The retired professor of theology, Rev. Karol Becicar, was subjected to such an extended and rigorous interrogation by the Secret Police that he suffered a complete mental collapse and had to be admitted to a psychiatric clinic (at Spisska Nova Ves in northern Slovakia).

In the summer of 1977 a group of students were suspected of participating in a spiritual retreat at their summer camp and were subjected to an exhausting investigation. Day after day, hour after hour, the interrogation continued, combined with threats and mental torture. One of the students, succumbing to depression, attempted suicide.

The aim of Party policy and the goal of all these measures against the clergy is to deprive the faithful of their shepherds. Time is on the side of the Communists. The average age of the priests is presently above sixty. The mortality rate is unusually high, not only among the aged, but also among young priests who are not able to cope with the pastoral and physical demands. Only 20 new priests every year for the entire CSSR are permitted. If the situation does not change within the next 10 years, the lack of priests in Slovakia will be catastrophic.

TEACHERS

In the course of the last 8 years all teachers who actively participated in the life of the church were gradually dismissed. Every encouragement of religion is strictly punished. Thus, at the end of 1977, several teachers of Nova Lubova were fined one-third of their monthly salary because they attended the funeral of their local priest. It is the duty of the teachers to dissuade parents and school children from attending religious instruction, to give instructions to atheistic in an outside school as well as in their respective communities. Parents in Slovakia have the right to register their children for religious classes in elementary grades under rigorous state control. In secondary schools religious instruction is not permitted. Every obstacle is used to prevent these instructions, and thus, the instruction declined from 60 percent in 1970 to 14 percent in 1973. Even this number caused issuance of new directives. In cities where a larger number of children indicated religious interest, rigorous investigations took place. Everywhere political commissions are organized in schools to dissuade parents and children from religious instruction. Pressure is put on parents by the unions and the management at the place of work. Both parents must be present when registering a child and every excuse is used to prevent such registration. Children going to religious instruction are not admitted to secondary schools and often they are not permitted to learn a trade. Often students are goaded to harrass their "pious" classmates, who are sometimes beaten up and excluded from other class activities.

CONCLUSION

You may ask me what our goal is with this catalogue of complaints. No doubt your attitude to these complaints may affect the fate of people in eastern Europe in some way. But what is more important is actually how it will affect the fate of this country, just as it had affected it in 1938. Because we are considering to sit down to possibly the most fateful negotiations, it is impotant to examine the record of their trustworthiness, their good faith of our partners of half of Europe. For what is involved here is not only violation of human rights of half of Europe, but also the breaking of international treaties and commitments, such as the Helsinki agreement, the human rights conventions of the U.N., of the Atlantic Charter, of the Yalta agreement and of a host of other most solemn undertakings. For in these solemn treaties, often in exchange for vast territorial concessions and guarantees and financial assistance, they undertook on their part no more than the traditional respect of human rights professed by all civilized states and, in particular, of religious freedom, which they solemnly enshrined in their constitutions and in their legislation.

Should we not be concerned if their intepretation of freedom of religion includes arrests of members of religious orders or priests for carrying out conscientiously their religious duties or denial of civil rights to believers who are declassed by a mass apartheid? And why should these accusations be systematically minimized and even denied by many people, including government officials? Aren't these the same regimes which have just been implicated by the courageous Italian judiciary in the monstrous attempt to kill the Pope, against whom the Czechoslovak Government has been waging a vicious campaign of vilification, calling him the most reactionary Pope in history and the enemy of the working man. And if they hit the head of perhaps the largest Church with venom and even bullets right in the midst of St. Peter's Square, within his own territory, why should it not be credible that they are capable of hitting some of his followers?

According to the Wall Street Journal, "accepting the Pope Plot as true carries with it an entire view of the nature of the Soviet Empire, and it is this view that many in the government, in the press and elsewhere have been reluctant to accept. The Journal concludes that "while it's not easy to say how to deal with Soviet lawlessness, the problem can't be faced until we agree it's there."

The **Chairman**. Thank you. We appreciate that.

We are going to take Mr. Jan Nowak now because he has to leave in just a few minutes.

STATEMENT OF JAN NOWAK, DIRECTOR, POLISH-AMERICAN CONGRESS, ANNANDALE, VA

Mr. **Nowak**. Mr. Chairman, Senator Pell.

Thank you very much for the privilege of inviting me to this hearing and testifying before the committee. Well, it may sound to you like a paradox, but under the Communist system, which is committed to the destruction of religion and church, the Polish Church in fact reached the historical climax of its influence and power in the postwar period. These are several factors which were responsible for this.

First, Poland emerged from World War II as a society with highly homogeneous ethic and religious structure of the population. The regime itself estimates that 80 percent of the people are praticing Catholics.

Now, it happened that in the postwar years the Polish Church had three very outstanding leaders: two primates, Cardinal August Hlond, Cardinal Stefan Vishinski; and Cardinal Koupe Wojytla, who became Pope John Paul II. Of course, the election of the charismatic Polish Pope did have tremendous impact on the Polish people.

But the strength and influence of the church have grown even more since the military crackdown. It can be simply explained by the fact that a Communist regime would never wage the war on two fronts. As long as the authorities are engaged and involved in the struggle with the nonviolent resistance movement, Solidarity, they cannot afford to attack the church at the same time.

On the other hand, the church in Poland has been traditionally on the side of people, particularly in time of stress. After marshal law, the churches were the only places where people could gather, where they could manifest their feelings, where they could hear outspoken sermons, hear the truth. This was the only place where the truth would be said loudly.

The unique position of the church after military crackdown may be partially explained by the conciliatory tactics of the present primate, Cardinal Josef Glemp. This state of affairs can change any time, theoretically at least. The hierarchy is aware of the fact that contingency plans do exist for a crackdown on the church, that there are lists of priests who would be arrested and interned in the same way as Solidarity leaders were.

In fact, the list of 69 outspoken priests was presented to Primate Glemp by the regime, with the threat that unless the church authorities will silence them they may in fact be arrested, and there is a considerable harassment of several particularly outspoken priests.

Nevertheless, a lot of over-ground activities of the opposition in Poland does take place at the premises of the church. The actors who are boycotting the theaters do perform in the church. The poets read their poetries. The artists display their works, and so on and so forth. Even a journalist, Bratkowski, who was a member of the Communist Party until 1980, and who then joined the opposition, could speak from the pulpit of a Warsaw church.

As I say, the present situation may change, but it is highly unlikely. The Solidarity in fact does represent the first line of defense of the church in Poland, and since nothing indicates that the police can eliminate the structure of Solidarity—it is so diversified, so decentralized, so widespread, and enjoys such a wide degree of popular support—I do not believe that the government will have a free hand to switch to its on slaught against the church as the next target.

At present, it is difficult to talk about restrictions, even less persecution of the church. Just the opposite, the regime is trying to drive a wedge between the people and the church by creating the perception that the church and the clergy are enjoying special privileges. For instance, while some people have difficulty getting passports to go to Rome to see the Pope, any priest would get his passport within 24 hours. In fact, the bishops had to introduce a ceiling; no more than five priests in any diocese are allowed to go to Rome at the same time.

So this is the situation as I see it today.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

What is your timeframe? How soon would you have to leave? Would you be able to wait to hear the other testimony and then be the first to be questioned?

Mr. **Nowak**. Unfortunately, I have a very important appointment at 4, but I could still stay for about 10 minutes.

The **Chairman**. Senator Pell, do you have any questions that you would like to put to Mr. Nowak?

Senator **Pell**. Not to Mr. Nowak, but I do to some of the other witnesses.

The **Chairman**. Very well. Let me say that we will submit additional questions to you for the record. In the meantime, let me ask you a couple of questions about the document issued in May 1977 by the Catholic bishops of the United States on religious freedom in Eastern Europe. I am sure you are familiar with that document.

The authors of the document urged U.S. policymakers "to give respect for religious freedom a more prominent role in the conduct of our relationship with the nations of Eastern Europe."

Do you believe that the U.S. Government has indeed raised the priority of religious freedom since the time of that statement by the Catolic bishops?

Mr. **Nowak**. Well, you know, Poland is a unique case. I fully support the document. I know the document. But in the first place, the situation in Poland has changed since 1977, so as far as the church is concerned there is no need right now for any action.

Of course, human rights are being violated in Poland, and the annual report, which I read, issued by the Bureau of Human Rights of the State Department shocked me as being not really a truthful report. But as far as the church is concerned, I fully support my brothers who are testifying here and I feel that the United States should focus its attention on the defense of religious rights in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and should be ready to defend them in Poland when the situation will call for it.

The **Chairman**. The Pope's visit to Poland in June of 1983 was really hailed around the world by Catholics and non-Catholics alike. The Pope's millions of admirers met him every step of the way, as they did when he came to Chicago.

Do you believe that the Pope's visit to Poland has had the effect of increasing interest in the Catholic Church in Poland, among young people particularly, and has it also had the effect of strengthening the Polish clergy in their dealings with the Polish Government?

Mr. **Nowak**. Well, it was enough to look at the television set. There were from 12 to 14 million people who saw the Pope, mostly young people. So the Catholic Church in Poland is the only one, I believe, who has such a strong appeal to the young generation.

It was obvious. It was a manifestation without precedent, really, and a considerable ideological defeat to the regime, which however was so anxious to gain some respectability in the world that they did allow the Pope to come. I think that Jaruzelski himself did hope to shake hands with the Pope, which would get him back at least some respectability both inside Poland and in the world.

Of course, the Pope was walking a very tight rope, but frankly there was nothing that he said or did which would contribute to or could be understood as sanctioning of the present suppression of Solidarity and human rights.

The CHAIRMAN. I want to thank you very much indeed on behalf of the committee for appearing with us. We appreciate your being with us.

Mr. NOWAK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I believe our last witness is Father Pugevičius.

STATEMENT OF FATHER CASIMIR PUGEVIČIUS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LITHUANIAN-CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS AID, BROOKLYN, NY

Father PUGEVIČIUS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator Pell.

Mr. Chairman, my name is Casimir Pugevičius. I am a Catholic priest, born in the United States, of Lithuanian immigrant parents. I am executive director of Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, and its Lithuanian Information Center. We receive firsthand reports smuggled out of Soviet-occupied Lithuania, documenting conditions of the Catholic Church in Lithuania and elsewhere in the Soviet Union.

We have the privilege of translating and disseminating such samizdat material as the Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, the documents of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights and those of the Lithuanian group to monitor compliance with the Helsinki accords, along with other firsthand documentation of the violation of religious rights in Soviet-occupied Lithuania, in contravention of the Soviet Constitution, the Helsinki Final Accords, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international agreements to which the U.S.S.R. is signatory.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify about the situation of the Catholic Church in Lithuania today. The compliation of this testimony is its present form was the work of Mrs. Marian Skabeikis, associate director of Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, who is here today.

In 1940, at the time of Lithuania's forced annexation into the Soviet Union, 85.5 percent of the country's more than 3 million inhabitants were Roman Catholic.

In the two archdioceses and four dioceses were 708 churches, 314 chapels, 73 monasteries, 85 convents, 3 archbishops, 9 bishops, 1,271 diocesan priests, 580 monks, of whom 168 were priests. Four seminaries had 470 students. There were 950 nuns, who cared for 35 kindergartens, 10 orphanages, 25 homes for the aged, 2 hospitals, 1 youth center, and 1 institute for the deaf-mute.

During the months of June and July 1940, with the advent of the Red army, the independent Government of Lithuania was replaced by a puppet Diet which allegedly petitioned for admission of Lithuania as a Soviet Socialist Republic. This and related events have been amply documented in the Report of the Select Committee To Investigate Communist Aggression and the Forced Incorporation of the Baltic States into the U.S.S.R.: Third Interim Report of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression—House of Representatives, 83d Congress, 2d Session.

On June 25, 1940, the Concordat of Lithuania with the Holy See was abrogated and the Papal Nuncio was expelled. Church property was confiscated and the flourishing Catholic press was abolished.

Religious education was eliminated, and the sole surviving seminary came under strict government regulation.

On June 15, 1941, 34,260 Lithuanians were packed off in cattle cars to undisclosed points in the Soviet Union. After World War II, the mass deportations resumed and continued until 1953. Major targets of these deportations were the Lithuanian bishops and clergy. As a result of deportation, death or execution, by 1947, Lithuania was left with one bishop.

In 1947, the last convents and monasteries were closed, their communities dispersed, and all monastic institutions were outlawed.

There was a slight improvement in the plight of religious believers in Soviet-occupied Lithuania after Stalin's death in 1953. However, relaxation of pressure on religious believers soon revealed that the Lithuanian people were still deeply religious. Almost immediately, the attack was resumed, this time more in the form of moral pressure, to avoid creating new martyrs to unify the faithful.

Although new bishops have been consecrated for Lithuania since 1955, their situation has never been regularized. Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius has never been permitted to administer his diocese. Bishop Vincentas Sladkevičius, consecrated in 1957, was kept under severe government restrictions until 1982, when he was permitted to return to his duties as Apostolic Administrator of Kaišiadorys.

Father Antanas Vaičius was named bishop and Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Telšiai and the Prelature of Klaipėda. Bishop Liudvikas Povilonis administers the Archdiocese of Kaunas and the Diocese of Vilkaviškis.

In 1972, the clandestine Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, began to reach the free world. Primarily intended to keep Catholics in Lithuania informed of the situation of the church there, it also serves as an appeal to the free world not to forget the Lithuanian struggle for basic human rights.

Periodic Soviet claims of religious gains are contradicted by the Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania and other documents:

Efforts by clergy and others to combat rampant alcoholism have been hampered by the Soviet Government.

The Soviet Government has repeatedly refused to return such confiscated churches as the Vilnius Cathedral, St. Casimir's Church, Kaunas Igula Church and the Queen of Peace Church in Klaipeda. A promise to allow the believers of Klaipeda to expand the existing church building, in response to worldwide petitions, has not been honored.

A Novosti report, March 6, 1984, boasts of the "publication of the first three volumes of the Missal (the priests' Mass-book) in Lithuanian." However, according to Bishop Vincentas Brizgys, a Lithuanian bishop in exile in Chicago, permission to print the missal was granted by Moscow only on condition that the Lithuanian Bishops' Conference supply its own paper.

Paper provided by the Vatican was mysteriously damaged, according to Bishop Brizgys, and printers have been "too busy" to complete the order.

The Novosti agency reports that believers have been allowed another publication—a family catechism, and that the publication of a 600-page prayer book in an edition of 160,000 copies is expected "and will be the fifth edition in the postwar years".

If the promised prayerbook materializes, it will not be the "fifth edition" of that prayer book, but only the fifth prayer book the Soviet Government has allowed to be published for the Catholics of Lithuania since 1940, nor would the promised printing supply the more than 500,000 Catholic families.

No one from Lithuania was permitted to attend solemnities at the Vatican on the feast day of St. Casimir, March 4, 1984, when the Pope celebrated a special Mass.

Cardinal Krol, through Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin, invited the exiled Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius to Philadelphia for solemnities in honor of the saint, on March 18. No response was received either from the bishop or Dobrynin.

The crisis condition faced by believers in Lithuania today can best be demonstrated by outlining the fate of: The Lithuanian Helsinki Monitors; the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights; the Sadūnas family; and teacher Jadvyga Bieliauskienė

The Lithuanian Helsinki group was founded on November 25, 1976, by five activists in Vilnius. Its ranks have been depleted by deaths and arrests.

Ona Lukauskaitė-Poškiene, the only remaining Lithuanian Helsinki monitor at large, died on December 4, 1983, just prior to her 78th birthday. She was one of the group's charter members.

Charter member Father Karolis Garuckas, SJ, died of cancer in 1979, and he was replaced by Father Bronius Laurinavičius, who was pushed to his death in 1981 under a truck. Dissident sources attributed his death to the KGB.

Jewish refusenik Eitan Finklestein left the group voluntarily hoping that this would expedite his request to emigrate. The physicist first applied to emigrate with his family in 1971, and was repeatedly denied permission to leave. He was forced to take menial jobs to support his family after being dismissed from work. After 12 years of waiting, he and his family were granted exit visas and emigrated to Israel.

Viktoras Petkus, arrested in 1977 for organizing Catholic youth activities is due to complete his third prison term in 1992. He has already served 21 years of his life in Soviet labor camps. Latest reports indicate that Petkus also joined the Ukrainian Helsinki Group while in labor camp.

Sources in Lithuania have urgently appealed for an International Red Cross inquiry into the health and whereabouts of Petkus, who at the time of this testimony has not been heard from for over 6 months.

Although granted visiting rights last December, Petkus' wife waited for 3 days at Kuchino labor camp without being allowed to see her husband.

It is feared that Petkus, who after years of medical neglect at the hands of prison officials had a malignant tumor removed from his face in 1982, may have died or been transported to an undisclosed location.

For the third consecutive year, Viktoras Petkus has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by the U.S. Congressional Committee on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

While in the United States as a guest lecturer, poet Tomas Venclova was stripped of his Soviet citizenship. He remains as the group's representative in the West.

Other activists accepted into the Lithuanian Helsinki Group have all been jailed.

Vytautas Skuodis, also known as Benedict Scott, an American citizen by birth, was arrested in 1979, a few months after joining the group. He had been documenting the low quality of attacks on religion in the Soviet press.

Soviet authorities declared psychiatrist Dr. Algirdas Statkevičius a danger to society and interned him in a psychiatric hospital.

Mečislovas Jurevičius and Vytautas Vaičiūnas were both arrested only weeks after joining the Lithuanian Helsinki Monitors in 1981, for organizing religious processions. Vaičiūnas was released from Bakal labor camp on September 24, 1983.

On November 13, 1978, the establishment of the Lithuanian Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights was announced in Moscow. Charter members were Fathers Vincas Vėlavičius, Alfonsas Svarinskas, Sigitas Tamkevičius, Juozas Zdebskis, and Jonas Kauneckas.

Over a 5-year period, the committee issued over 50 documents and expressions of protest to various agencies, inside and out of the Soviet Union, calling for an end to the persecution of believers, especially youth; release of prisoners of conscience; a halt to government meddling in internal affairs of the church; especially regarding the theological seminary and the appointments of clergy; return of confiscated church property, and other matters.

Current members of the committee at liberty are Fathers Leonas Kalinauskas, Vincentas Vėlavičius, and Vaclovas Stakėnas.

Father Juozas Zdebskis was seriously burned under mysterious circumstances several years ago.

Father Alfonsas Svarinskas, the first priest to be arrested and tried under the criminal code since the appearance of the Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania in 1972, has been sentenced to 7 years of strict regime labor camp and 3 years of internal exile for alleged "anticonstitutional and antistate activities," May 6, 1983.

Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, arrested during the trial of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas, was sentenced on December 2, 1983, to 6 years strict regime labor camp and 4 years internal exile.

Father Algimantas Keina, after refusing to provide information to interrogators about the activities of the committee, resigned.

Father Kazimieras Žilys, a member of the committee, offered to resign from the committee in return for permission to do missionary work in the other Soviet republics. His resignation, without mention of the condition, has been used to undermine other members of the committee.

Fathers Leonas Kalinauskas, Vaclovas Stakėnas, and Vincentas Velavičius, refusing to resign, have been subjected to interrogations and threats of arrest.

Jonas Sadūnas, the brother of Lithuanian human rights activist Nijolė Sadūnaitė, was sentenced on May 24, 1983, to 18 months of deprivation of freedom. Sadūnas was convicted for "personal libel" under paragraph 132 of the Lithuanian S.S.R. Criminal Code.

The Sadūnas family has been the subject of government harassment since 1974, when Nijolė Sadūnaite was arrested for typing the Chronicle. Sadūnaite served 3 years in labor camp and 3 years of internal exile.

When his sister, Nijolė, returned to Lithuania in 1980, Jonas Sadūnas gave his sister a room in his house. The government then began to censor their mail.

In 1981, the house was burglarized, and Ms. Sadūnaite's letters from camp were stolen. In 1982, the house was searched and religious articles confiscated.

On November 1, 1982, Sadūnas, who suffers from mycarditis, was summoned from his hospital bed for interrogation.

On November 18, 1982, Sadūnas was interned in the Naujosios Vilnios Psychiatric Hospital. He was released 2 weeks later.

Sadūnas was falsely accused of slandering the director of a collective farm. This resulted in his present sentence.

Mrs. Marija Sadūnienė, wife of Jonas, has been summoned from work for interrogation about her sister-in-law and the dissemination of clandestine literature.

Nijole Sadūnaitė is currently a fugitive in the Soviet Union.

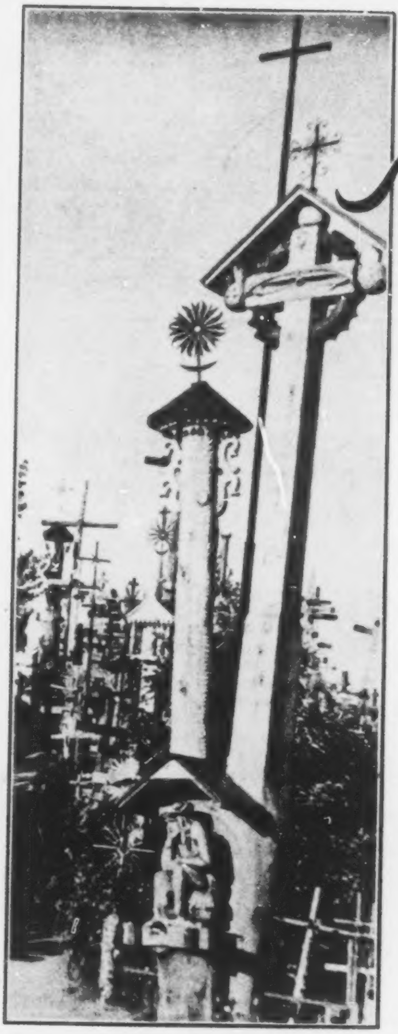
Despite 40 years of atheist education, the young people of Lithuania show a renewed interest in religion: Mrs. Jadvyga Bieliauskienė, a teacher, was accused of collecting signatures on a petition protesting the persecution of young religious believers, of working with the Chronicle, and of organizing children for religious and nationalist reasons.

Mrs. Bieliauskienė, who had served 8 years of a 25-year sentence after World War II, is herself a former atheist.

Because of her positive influence on the youth, she was accused of anti-Soviet activities, and sentenced to 4 years of strict regime labor camp and 3 years of internal exile.

Thank you very much.

[Attachments to Father Pugevičius' statement follow:]



A Chronicle of Courage

The persecuted church of Lithuania

by
CINDY CAVNAR

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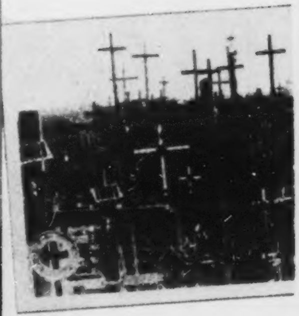


A Chronicle of Courage

The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania tells a dramatic story of persecution and faith.

by Cindy Cavnar

In a Chicago nursing home an elderly woman weeps, troubled by memories she cannot escape. In reality it is 1983. To her, it is 1941 and she is back in her native Lithuania, a country on the Baltic Sea.

World War II has engulfed the tiny eastern European nation, bringing with it occupation by Russia. The Soviet army's method for subduing the population is direct and brutal. Some are killed, but still more—over 34,000 in two days—are rounded up and deported to undisclosed points in the Soviet Union. Most never return. Meanwhile, the Russians oversee the "election" of a new government which decides to merge the country with the Soviet Union. The independent nation of Lithuania is no more.

Forty years later and half a world away, the memories persist. In her confusion, the elderly woman recalls the agonizing death of her husband at the hands of Soviet soldiers. She cries out repeatedly that the Russians are coming to get her too.

Thousands of Lithuanians around the world share similar memories. Perhaps the memory is most bitter, however, for those still living in Lithuania. There daily contact with the Soviet government reminds them that the occupation did not end with World War II. The United States and some other countries still refuse to recognize the Soviet Union's annexation of Lithuania and two other Baltic nations, Estonia and Latvia. Yet the Russians intend to stay.

The Soviets face one obstacle, however, that they have not been able to overcome: the faith of the Lithuanian people. Like nearby Poland, Lithuania is a predominantly Catholic country where religion, culture, and national identity are closely joined. People have a deep commitment to their faith and their church, which makes them all the more determined to resist the militantly atheistic Soviet regime. The Soviets realize that to break down Lithuanian nationalism they must also break down the Catholic Church.

The majority of Lithuania's three-and-a-half million people, in turn, have mounted a determined fight for their religious rights. Unfortunately, their courageous stand has attracted little attention. Most Americans are aware of religious repression in Poland. But Poland is an independent country dominated by the Soviet Union and actually enjoys relative religious freedom. As a nation directly incorporated into the Soviet Union, Lithuania

enjoys no such advantage. Nevertheless, the story of Lithuania remains largely untold, ignored by journalists who spin off countless stories on human rights violations in more prominent international settings. Meanwhile, the Christians of Lithuania risk death, prison, and constant harassment in their struggle to keep their faith alive.

Russian intentions were clear from the start of the occupation, when they placed severe restrictions on the work of the church. But worse lay ahead. At the close of the war Lithuanians found themselves squarely in the midst of the terror unleashed by Soviet leader Joseph Stalin. Along with roughly 20 million Soviet citizens, one out of five Lithuanians was exiled in the mad purges that characterized Stalin's reign. Most of these men, women, and children died under horrifying conditions in Siberian labor camps or in uninhabited Arctic regions.

While liquidating part of the population through deportation, the Russians continued to hammer away at the church. They seemed particularly intent on driving a wedge between the Vatican and the faithful. The Soviets tried propaganda, representing themselves as the "liberator from Vatican slavery." That tactic failed. They proposed a National Lithuanian Catholic Church. That failed too. They started a press campaign against the pope, claiming, for example, that Pope Pius XII had collaborated with Hitler. No one believed them. They even tried sending false priests to take over parishes that had no pastors. The parishioners were not fooled. One bishop summed up the spirit of resistance when he told his priests: "Whatever the government says, do the opposite and all will be well."

As dictator of the Soviet Union from 1929 to his death in 1953, Joseph Stalin was responsible for some of the worst of Lithuania's sufferings. The picture above, sometimes called "The Madonna of Lithuania," shows the widow of one of Stalin's victims in 1941 kneeling over her husband's tortured body. Other pictures show the wayside crosses and pilgrimages that remain important expressions of Lithuanian Catholic life.

Repression eased for a short time after the death of Stalin in 1953. Thirty-five thousand Lithuanian deportees returned to their country, including 130 priests. Some of these priests voluntarily returned to exile to serve as unofficial chaplains in the camps.

In the late 1950's the Russians launched a new offensive against believers. For the most part they abandoned the use of mass deportations. Instead they applied tight restrictions on religious work and relentless psychological and moral pressure on Christians.

Lithuanians still remember the state's handling of Catholics in the city of Klaipeda. In 1956 the government granted the pastor there a permit to build a church. Over the next four years the people built the enormous structure with their own hands and raised the money to pay for it. On August 15, 1960, they gathered for the consecration ceremony, only to find the entrance boarded up. The state had confiscated the building. Believers protested—and still do—but over the next year the church remained off-limits and subject to vandalism by the army. In 1961 the government turned it into a concert hall.

For a time it seemed the state might break the will of the Lithuanian people. "You can't knock a wall down with your head" became the slogan of Catholics who went over to the side of the government. But then, when the church seemed doomed to fade away, signs of renewal began to appear.

One woman captures the new vision in a letter to *Tiesa*, the Communist paper. "I am only 20 years old and have my whole life ahead of me," she wrote. "I see many wonderful things in my present life. I work and I study . . . but I cannot divide my heart in two, because it belongs totally to the church. My religion is my real heart: to deny me my religion is to tear out my heart."

Priests bore the brunt of retaliation as the state cracked down on the resurgent spirit. Fathers Antanas Šeškevičius, Juozas Zdebskis, and Prosperas Bubnys were sent to labor camps because they taught religion to children. At his trial Fr. Šeškevičius told the court, "God must be obeyed rather than men." Two priests protested state interference in the one remaining seminary. The government forbade them to work as priests and ordered them to get jobs. When Fr. Lionginas Kunevicius came to their defense the state drafted him into military service.

In 1972 the ravaged church found a voice in a remarkable journal, *The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*. The *Chronicle* has appeared roughly every other month since then. As one of the many *samizdat*, or self-published, underground magazines that circulate within the Soviet Union, it alerts readers to religious persecution and other human rights violations in Lithuania. It prints letters from prisoners, accounts of trials, letters and petitions to the Soviet government, accounts of persecution in the schools, and similar documents, which vividly capture the drama of Lithuanian resistance.

The *Chronicle* reads like a 20th-century Acts of the Apostles. Not infrequently the reader is tempted to cheer and often enough to weep. Either seems a fitting response to the courage of Gemma-Jadvyga Stanelytė, sentenced to three years in a labor camp for organizing a religious procession. From camp she wrote: "I accept gratefully from the Lord's hands every instant, all unexpected things, ridicule, debasement, injuries: small prickles from Christ's crown of thorns. This is a good practice of the theory I was taught: to love humiliation and sacrifice—in other words, the last place—and everywhere to perceive the hand of the merciful God."

Almost every issue of the *Chronicle* carries a few stories detailing the destruction of wayside shrines and chapels. In the summer of 1981 the state carried the familiar routine to new heights. During the war Russians tortured to death 73 Lithuanians in Rainiai Woods at Telsiai. A grave marks the spot. On July 15, 1981, someone erected a cross on the site. The police cut it down and threw it in the river. Someone collected the pieces and reassembled the cross.

"On the morning of August 11, news spread throughout Telsiai: 'Three crosses stand in the Rainiai Woods!' In the late afternoon of that same day, a [state] work brigade . . . attempted to cut the crosses down with saws but were unsuccessful: the wood had a metal core. They tried to uproot them, but they stood firm. . . . A company of soldiers then surrounded the woods. The residents of Rainiai were startled by three explosions. The people again attempted to reassemble the demolished crosses and tied them to trees."

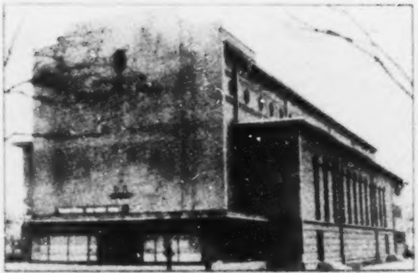
The men and women who secretly publish and distribute the *Chronicle* do so at considerable personal risk. The KGB—the security police—continually hunts them down, and when and if they are identified they face imprisonment in Siberia, among other possibilities.

Nijolė Sadūnaitė received a six-year sentence for her work with the *Chronicle*. During her trial she told the court: "We don't have the strength of numbers on our side, but we have quality. We are not afraid of your prisons or concentration camps and consider it our duty to denounce your actions which discriminate, humiliate, and oppress people. . . . You may pass any laws you like, but keep them for yourselves. One has to discern what belongs to man and what God has commanded. Caesar can be given whatever is left over from what we owe to God. . . . Jesus Christ truthfully said: 'By their fruits you will know them.' Every day your crimes are bringing you closer to history's junk heap."

Fr. Casimir Pugevicius directs Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, Inc., in Brooklyn, New York. His name reflects his Lithuanian heritage, and his voice, touched with a hint of Brooklyn, reflects his American roots.

Fr. Pugevicius's zeal for his fellow Lithuanians is burdened, perhaps, by the feeling that few in the free world are attentive to their distress. Nevertheless, his office devotes half its efforts to providing material and spiritual aid to Lithuanians in Lithuania. The rest is devoted to informing the outside world of the plight of this "outpost of Catholicism in the Soviet Union."

Fr. Pugevicius became involved in the Lithuanian cause through the *Chronicle*. "When I read the first issue of the *Chronicle* I found it tremendously exciting," he says. "I felt it made the sufferings of the persecuted church come to life." On the conviction that the material



Although built with government permission, Queen of Peace Church in the city of Klaipeda was confiscated before its consecration in 1960. Shorn of its steeple, the church serves today as a concert hall. Meanwhile, the Catholics of Klaipeda still lack an adequate church. Below: Nijolė Sadūnaitė during her six-year exile for work with the *Chronicle*.

was important, he began translating the journal into English.

As time went on, Fr. Pugevicius became increasingly involved in the struggle. One event in particular convinced him of the importance of such work. He happened to be at a reception in Washington attended by a delegation from Lithuania.

"Lithuanians are very cautious about what they say and to whom they say it," he points out. "But at this reception one of the delegates sidled up to me and whispered, 'For God's sake, help us, Father. They're strangling us to death.' Then he walked away. I'd never talked to him before, and I've never talked to him since. I'll never forget it."

The *Chronicle* documents the activities of militant Lithuanian Catholics. Fr. Pugevicius points out that not everyone falls into that category. "Labels are dangerous," he says, "but at the risk of over-simplification we can say that there are those moderates who don't want to rock the boat." These Christians agree to practice their religion within the limits imposed by the Soviets.

"The militants say, 'Let's fight while we can,'" Fr. Pugevicius notes. "'Ten more years of passivity and we won't have anything left to fight with.'"

The atheists are indeed making inroads. The state employs one simple yet particularly effective means to silence the church: It attempts to create a climate of mistrust and fear among believers. The KGB uses its timeless standbys—threats and rewards—to entice everyone from bishop to child to act as a government collaborator. The Lithuanian can never be sure the fellow next to him at communion will not betray him to the KGB the next day. "The Russians can be masters of psychology," Fr. Pugevicius admits ruefully.

The *Chronicle* states that "such pressure, extending over the years, has produced results. Hence Lithuanians today do not trust one another, fear to speak out, and are constantly afraid of being betrayed."

Determined to nip religion in the bud, the state devotes a good deal of attention to the atheistic education of young people. This can include anything from formal courses in "scientific atheism" to ridiculing a child in front of his classmates because he sings in the church choir.

A glance through any *Chronicle* reveals that young people stand up fairly well to the pressure. "In October 1978 Principal A. Gūzaitytė . . . bombarded 10th-grader Sigmas Lemkis with questions on why he attends church. . . . 'A dark future is in store for you,' the principal said in an outburst. Lemkis stood his ground. 'I've been going to church and will continue to go.'"

At another school the leader of the Pioneers, a Communist youth group, "tried to force Vilija Žitkutė and Jūratė Petruškevičiūtė to join the Pioneers. The girls refused. Then the Pioneer leader asked if they believed in God. The girls admitted that they do. 'And do you go to church?' 'We do.' Then the leader stood the girls in front of the class and began to educate the students. 'These are the nation's future enemies.' The teacher flung words of utter contempt at the girls."

Fr. Pugevicius points out that practicing Catholics in Lithuania are deprived of a higher education. Young people know that, which makes their resistance even more impressive.

continued ➤

Viktoras Petkus

Repeatedly throughout the *Chronicle* the reader encounters pleas for help addressed to Christians worldwide. Is this a realistic expectation? It should be, according to Fr. Pugevicius.

"First," he points out, "we have to realize that this is not a Lithuanian problem. This is a Christian, a Catholic, problem. These are our brothers and sisters, and they need help." In particular, he adds, they need prayer. That, in fact, is one of the most frequent requests coming from Lithuanians themselves, who write, "Many of us can attest from our own personal experience to the power of prayer."

Christians in the United States need to educate themselves to some degree in eastern European history. Armed with knowledge they might be more likely to take political action on behalf of persecuted minorities. Lack of knowledge, on the other hand, feeds passivity. Fr. Pugevicius laments, "We Catholics have never gotten our act together." He points to American Jews who acted together on behalf of Soviet Jews and were able to influence American foreign policy in favor of their Russian brothers and sisters.

On a formal level, Fr. Pugevicius would like to see schools address themselves to the study of oppressed nationalities. "Many schools now have programs on peace and justice," he says. "Holocaust studies—centering on the Nazi era—are being introduced on a systematic basis. Why not have studies that would deal with persecution and genocide outside of the Nazi regime?" Christians in particular should have some understanding of efforts since the days of the catacombs to destroy the church.

The silence surrounding the issue of persecution in Soviet countries is due in part to a general reaction to the extreme anti-Communism of the 1950's and 1960's. Fr. Pugevicius asserts that to oppose Communism is not to advocate a return to such stridency.

"We have to be realistic," he says. "The term atheistic Communism has become a cliche, an object of derision. But there *is* such a thing as militant atheism. For a lot of us the local atheist is the nice guy down the street with whom we can debate the existence of God. It's quite a different story in the Soviet Union. When you read how militant atheism works in practice it makes your hair stand on end."

As for the Lithuanians themselves, Fr. Pugevicius speaks of them with great admiration. "Charismatic terminology isn't used, but it's obvious that a real religious revival is taking place there. Those who make the commitment to stand firm are deeply spiritually motivated. One man wrote to his wife from prison and told her not to send chit-chat in her letters. 'We're not allowed Bibles,' he told her, 'so just quote me scripture.'"

A Prayer from Prison

Some of the most moving passages from *The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* come from the letters of prisoners. "Our prisoners," the *Chronicle* calls them, and in fact many are serving sentences for distributing underground literature.

Viktoras Petkus is one Lithuanian veteran of the Soviet prisons. He went to prison in 1947 for participation in a Catholic youth organization, and again in 1957 for distributing anti-Soviet literature. He was arrested again in 1977 for his activities with a Lithuanian group attempting to monitor the Soviet observance of the Helsinki treaty, which promised respect for human rights. In 1978 Mr. Petkus was sentenced to three years in prison, to be followed by seven years in a labor camp and five years exile within the Soviet Union.

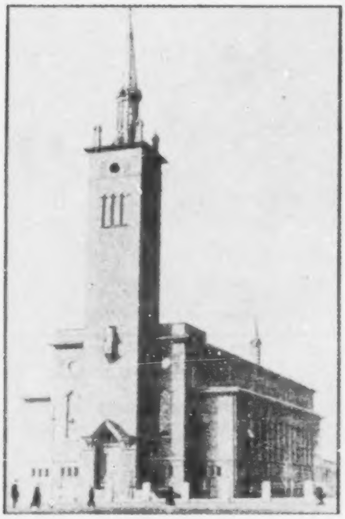
"I have somehow become accustomed to my surroundings," he wrote from prison in 1981. "In gratitude to divine providence, I therefore nightly repeat a prayer I learned 30 years ago:

"'You come to me through thick stone walls,
armed guards and bars;
You bring me a starry night,
and ask me about this or that.
You are the redeemer, I recognize you.
You are my way, my truth and my life.

"'Even my cellar blooms forth with stars,
and peace and light pours forth.
You sprinkle beautiful words on me like flowers:
"Son, what are you afraid of?
I am with you!"
In a corner we whisper psalms to which
the deaf prison listens.'"

Lithuanian Catholics echo Fr. Pugevicius's observation. "We are strong," some of them wrote in one *Chronicle*, "because we are not alone: God is our refuge and strength." The evidence is there, Fr. Pugevicius concludes. "In the middle of all that suffering, the Spirit is at work." ■

Cindy Cavnar is known to many *New Covenant* readers for her series "Great Christian Writers," which has appeared in past issues of the magazine. For more information on how to support Catholics in Lithuania, contact Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, Inc., 351 Highland Blvd., Brooklyn, NY 11207.



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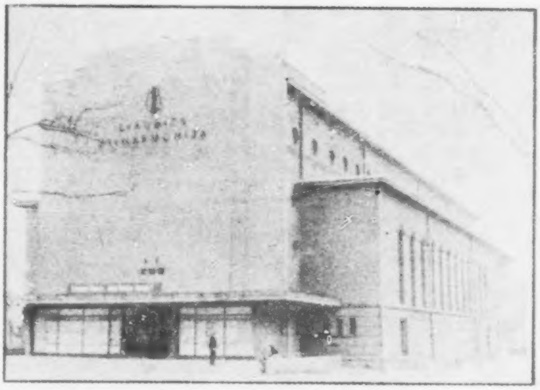


After

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE KLAIPĖDA CHURCH

For the first time in postwar Lithuanian history, the believers of Klaipėda, a port town on the Baltic Sea, obtained permission from the Soviet government to build a church. Construction was begun in 1956 and completed in four years with funds and labor donated by the local residents. However, the Church of St. Mary, Queen of Peace on 6 Rumpsiškės Street in Klaipėda was closed down on August 15, 1960 and officially confiscated in 1961 under direct order of Nikita Khrushchev. The church was converted into a philharmonic concert hall.

Not willing to accept the government takeover so simply, the people of Klaipėda began petitioning the Soviet authorities for the return of their church. 3,012 people signed petitions in 1972, 30,782 in 1973, 3,500 in 1974, 10,241 in March 1979, an unprecedented 148,149 in October 1979, over 600 in 1980, 1,008 in 1981 and 21,033 in 1982.

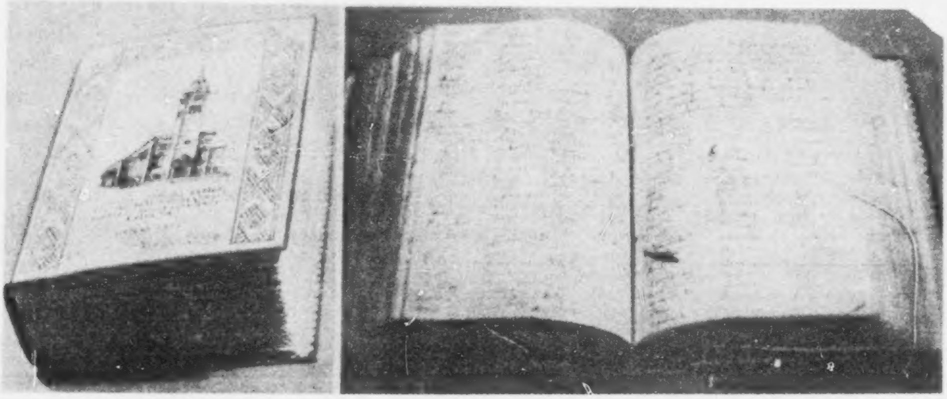
The April 1982 petition complained of overcrowded conditions at the small building the Catholics presently use for services. The believers in Klaipėda claim the facilities are "wholly inadequate for the needs of the Catholic population". An estimated 8,000 regularly attend rotating services, with 900 new members joining each year. Lithuanian churchgoers say people often faint during services, adding impetus to the need for a resolution.

V.A. Kuroyedov, chairman of the USSR Council for Religious Affairs, told a delegation which traveled from Klaipėda, Lithuania to Moscow in June and September of 1981, that permission would be granted for Catholics to build a new sanctuary.

While Kuroyedov admitted that the Soviet government seized the church illegally and guaranteed approval for a new building permit, Lithuanian Catholics had received no confirmation by December 5, 1981. 250 people then signed a statement further demanding the return of the confiscated church property.

Klaipėda is the third largest city in Lithuania. The predominantly Roman Catholic country of 3.4 million was occupied by the Soviets during World War II.

The Soviet government arrested the builder of the Klaipėda church, Father Liudas Povilonis, who was its pastor. In January of 1962, he and his assistant, Fr. B. Burneikis, and five laymen were brought to trial for allegedly stealing state property, speculating in foreign currency and participating in other black market activities. All were found guilty. Father Povilonis and Father Burneikis were sentenced to 8 and 5 years respectively. Consecrated bishop in 1969, Povilonis now administers the Archdiocese of Kaunas and the Diocese of Vilkaviškis.



A petition signed by 148,149 in Lithuania, appealed to then President of the USSR, Leonid Brezhnev, for the return of the Klaipėda church. The petition, dated July 1, 1979, with the most signatures ever to come out of Lithuania, was bound in a 1,589 page book, together with 56 photographs of the damage done to the religious decoration of the church during its conversion. The believers wrote:

> "We have appealed many times to you, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, asking you to help us... In returning the church, you would rectify the wrong done to believers and put right the unjust act of the local authorities. You would clearly show yourself to be a man of peace, for the church was dedicated to the Queen of Peace".

JOIN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE KLAIPĖDA CHURCH

1. A petition being circulated by the Lithuanian community of Australia for the return of the Klaipėda church has been officially entered into the Senatorial record of the Australian Parliament and acknowledged by the Australian Foreign Minister in the Spring of 1982.

   The National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry has initiated a similar petition in the United States. Collect signatures for the sample petition and return to the Task Force, 1307 South Wabash Ave., #221, Chicago, IL 60605.

2. In Lithuania, the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights issued an appeal on August 15, 1979 to clergy and lay people in Lithuania and abroad to address the Soviet authorities on the problem of the Klaipėda church. With the approach of two major anniversaries - the 500th anniversary of St. Casimir's death in 1984 and the 600th anniversary of Lithuania's conversion in 1987 - they recommend that the Soviets return all confiscated churches to the believers of Lithuania. Urge religious leaders and other concerned persons to send appeals in solidarity with Lithuanian Catholics to the USSR Chairman for Religious Affairs, Mr. V.A. Kuroyedov at Sovet po Delam Religii pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR, Predsedatelyu, Smolensky bl. 11/2, Moskva G-121, USSR, Tel. 243 85 65/15 and to Chairman for Religious Affairs of the Lithuanian SSR, P. Anilionis at 232600 Vilnius, Totorių 1, Lithuania, USSR, Tel. 61 95 29.

3. The Attorney-General and Minister for Ethnic Affairs of Tasmania, Australia, sent a letter to the Soviet ambassador to Australia about the illegal seizure of the Klaipėda church.

   In response to another request, the Soviet embassy in Canberra flatly refused to forward a letter from the Tasmanian Council of Churches to Moscow about the Klaipėda church. According to the Soviet embassy, the facilities have been used by the philharmonic for over 20 years and the Catholics of Klaipėda are using another building for church services.

   Write to: Ambassador A. Dobrynin, Embassy of the USSR, 1125 16th St. NW,
   Washington, DC 20036
   Yakov Malik, Soviet Mission to the UN, 136 E. 67th St., New York,
   NY 10021

4. Send letters of support to the Chairman of the Klaipėda church committee, Mr. Jonas Saunorius, Tarybinės Armijos 41-5, 235800 Klaipėda, Lithuania, USSR. Any language will do.

5. Get your local paper interested in the plight of Lithuanian Catholics. Use the Klaipėda church as an example of the Soviet violation of its officially proclaimed policy allowing freedom of religion. Write LIC for details. Reprints of Dick Goldkamp's article on the Klaipėda church in the Catholic Twin Circle are available on request.

Prepared by

LITHUANIAN INFORMATION CENTER
351 Highland Boulevard
Brooklyn, New York 11207, USA

Tel. /212/ 647-2434

We, the undersigned, support the return of ST. MARY, QUEEN OF PEACE CHURCH in KLAIPĖDA to the Catholics of Klaipėda and the entire Lithuanian nation so that it may be used for religious purposes.

PRISONER-PRIEST

Father Sigitas Tamkevičius

Address: Uchr. 5110/1
Moscow
USSR

November 7, 1938	Born in Lithuania.
1957	Conscripted from the third year of the seminary into the army.
1960	Returns to the seminary after military service.
1961	KGB attempts to unsuccessfully to recruit him as an agent, threatening to expel him from the seminary.
1962	Ordained to priesthood by Bishop Petras Mazelis. KGB again tries to recruit Tamkevicius.
1960's	Serves as assistant pastor in Lazdijai, where he is reprimanded for catechizing youth. Transferred under pressure to another diocese.
Sept. 1967 - May 1968	Serves briefly as assistant pastor in two parishes. The government forbids him to preach. Frequently moved from one parish to another to prevent his work with young people.
1969	Serves as assistant pastor in Vilkaviskis. Together with other priests, he draws up a petition demanding that the government allow more candidates for the priesthood. Banned from working as a parish priest, he works as a factory laborer and as a farm hand.
1970	To monitor his activities, Soviet authorities allow him to return to pastoral duties.
1974	He is accused of disseminating the clandestine "Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania".
1975	At government order, Tamkevicius is transferred to a larger parish, in the hope that he will be swamped with work, leaving no time for troublesome activities.
1978	The KGB attempts to blame him for an automobile accident. Fined for organizing an All Souls Day procession. Parishioners protest to First Secretary Griskevicius and a crowd of 400 attends his trial and cheers him.
November 13, 1978	Father Tamkevicius, with four other priests, including Father Svarinskas, establishes the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights.
April 17, 1980	KGB agents carefully search Father Tamkevicius' quarters all day long. After the raid, word of Father Tamkevicius' impending arrest spreads. The KGB accuses him of sheltering ex-convicts, editing the Chronicle, and agitating against the Soviet government in sermons.
May 6, 1983	He is arrested in the Vilnius courthouse during the trial of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas for engaging in "illegal and unlawful activity, the main purpose of which was to discredit the Soviet state..."
October 13, 1983	The State Department protests: "...The U.S. government condemns this kind of official pressure of those in the USSR who seek to exercise their basic right to freedom of worship and hope that Tamkevicius will not suffer the same fate as Svarinskas."
November 29, 1983	TASS announces that the trial of Tamkevicius begins in Vilnius.
December 2, 1983	Father Tamkevicius is sentenced to 6 years strict regime labor camp and 4 years exile.

Prepared by LITHUANIAN INFORMATION CENTER, 351 Highland Blvd., Brooklyn NY 11207

SHOOT ← 24½ pi → (2-sided)

PRISONER-PRIEST

Father Alfonsas Svarinskas

Camp address: 618263, Permskaya obl.,
Chusovskoy r-n,
pos. Kuchino,
uchr. VS-389/36,
USSR

January 21, 1925.........Svarinskas born.

December 31, 1946........Seminary studies interrupted by arrest and sentence to prison camp, where his dedication to sick saves the life of Iosif Slipyj, now Cardinal.

October 3, 1954..........Ordained priest by Martyr-Bishop P. Ramanauskas.

1956.....................Returns to active ministry in Lithuania.

June, 1958...............Arrested for alleged anti-Soviet activity, sentenced to 6 years in labor camp.

1964.....................Released from labor camp, works as an unregistered priest in Lithuania for 20 months.

1971.....................Assigned as pastor to Village of Igliauka.

1970-71..................Despite threats, Svarinskas continues speaking out against persecution of religion in Lithuania.

1976.....................Appointed to the large parish of Vidukle, in hope that pastoral work will drain him. Constantly harassed by local authorities.

1977.....................Fined for leading religious processions on All Souls Day.

November 13, 1978........Along with four other Catholic priests, he establishes the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights in Lithuania.

November 22, 1978........He joins two other priests at a press conference in Moscow to announce the formation of the Committee.

1979.....................Threatened with arrest. Placed under special surveillance as his influence among the clergy grows. Speaks at the funerals of many priests well-known in the movement for religious rights in Lithuania, such as that of Fr. Garuckas in 1979 and Fr. Jaugelis in 1980. He also becomes one of the leading lights of the Catholic temperance movement and often speaks out against alcoholism.

July 27, 1981............The looting of his church in Vidukle, one in a series of attacks on houses of worship and clerics in Lithuania, prompts Svarinskas to plead for an end to government-sponsored violence.

Winter 1981..............Svarinskas refuses to pay the fine for an illegal procession and has his refrigerator confiscated instead. Local authorities cut off the heating in the Vidukle rectory, because people came there to get warm after Mass, as the church was not heated.

February 20, 1982........Svarinskas is warned by Soviet authorities for allowing minors to congregate in his home, after a group of children and parents come to the rectory after evening mass for a small pre-Lenten celebration.

July 1982................During the welcome accorded to the new Bishop Vaicius of Telsiai, Fr. Svarinskas makes a speech in the name of the Catholic Committee.

November 1, 1982.........Svarinskas rejects the highly restrictive Regulations for Religious Associations in a petition signed by the majority of priests in Lithuania.

January 26, 1983.........Father Svarinskas is arrested a third time for alleged "anticonstitutional and antistate activities."

May 6, 1983..............Father Alfonsas Svarinskas is sentenced to 7 years strict regime labor camp and 3 years exile in Vilnius.

HUMAN
RIGHTS
DENIED

Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid
351 Highland Blvd.
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11207

Imagine a country where you get thrown in jail for organizing a Christmas party... Where you are beaten and threatened with sexual assault for attending a spiritual retreat... A place where going to church can make you lose your job or block your way to higher education.

Such a place exists today—in Lithuania. Once independent, this country of over three million people on the Baltic Sea, was occupied by the Soviet Union during World War II. Like its Polish neighbor, Lithuania is predominantly Roman Catholic.

By conservative estimates, there are four million western-rite Catholics in the Soviet Union. The Soviet government takes action against those believers who speak out or are perceived as potential opposition.

These people are from all walks of life and of all ages. They are teachers, priests, doctors, journalists, office workers, nurses. Many are leaders, involved in social development. Others are merely victims of their association with those deemed "dangerous."

Some of them have been killed under suspicious circumstances.

Some are closely monitored by the secret police. Their homes are searched by KGB agents. They are summoned for long and arduous interrogations.

Some have been banned from working in their profession. They are kept under house arrest or exiled to remote areas far from home and family.

Many are prisoners of conscience, arrested for their beliefs, for expressing their opinions, for disclosing information the Soviets would rather keep from the public. Many are convicted at "open" trials, which friends and family are not allowed to attend, or sentenced to psychiatric confinement.

Subhuman living conditions, meager diet, inadequate medical care, verbal abuse, forcible injections of psychotropic drugs, isolation from loved ones—are the everyday realities of life in Soviet labor camp, internal exile and psychiatric hospital for the prisoner of conscience.

For every victim of persecution, we must speak out. The plight of Lithuanian Catholics must not be forgotten or ignored. If people act now, imprisoned Lithuanians can be protected from the more extreme forms of punishment.

The following profiles are taken from reports made available to Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid as of January 1984.

Mr. and Mrs. A. Terleckas

ANTANAS TERLECKAS

Terrorized for his Beliefs

Antanas Terleckas was noted for his civic courage and candor. He was highly esteemed by leading Russian dissident Andrei Sakharov who often spoke warmly about him. The 56-year-old economist and historian was arrested in January 1980 for the fourth time. He was charged with anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda for allegedly circulating self-published literature, and was sentenced to 3 years of strict regime labor camp and 5 years of internal exile.

Antanas was one of the signatories to the Baltic 45 memorandum, a statement demanding self-determination for the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. He also organized press conferences for foreign correspondents. Over the years, his name appeared on numerous appeals, even on those addressed to Pope John Paul II and President Ronald Reagan from labor camp.

The three day trip to labor camp after the trial was prolonged to 50 days, in order to sap what little strength the sick prisoner had left. In transit, he was taken to the same prisons again and again, and for some stretches of the trip, forced to subsist on a half loaf of bread daily.

In camp, the KGB still tried to "break him down." Because he refused to recant his beliefs, Terleckas was denied mail and visits from his family.

Antanas Terleckas is serving the second part of his sentence in exile in the Far East. He is in very poor health, with swollen legs, because of the difficult environmental conditions.

His address in exile is: 686410 Magadanskaya obl., Omsukchansky raion, pos. Industrialny, ul. Sportivnaya 5 - kv. 17, USSR.

His wife, Mrs. Elena Terleckiene, resides in Vilnius, with their three children at: Nemencines plentas 68, Vilnius 232016, Lithuania, USSR.

"I want only to live in Lithuania and remain faithful to the end of my life to my ideal, which I do not hide from the KGB. Here it is—a free man in a free and independent Lithuania."

REV. BRONIUS LAURINAVICIUS

Helsinki Monitor Killed in Vilnius

Father Bronius Laurinavicius' violent death in 1981 sent shock waves throughout Lithuania. He was one of two members remaining at large in the Lithuanian Group to Monitor Implementation of the Helsinki Accords. Since then, the last member died. The others in the Group, founded in 1976, are either serving long sentences in labor camp, have been sent to a psychiatric hospital or have emigrated.

Laurinavicius said there had been two previous attempts on his life. Days before his death, he was viciously attacked in the leading Communist Party daily for "luring youth to church."

For his display of exceptional religious devotion and civic awareness, Laurinavicius was labeled a "reactionary" by Soviet officials. He was often advised to limit his pastoral activity, especially among youth. Over the years, Father Laurinavicius had actively petitioned the government on human rights.

Summoned to Vilnius for questioning, Laurinavicius was approached by four men on the street and pushed under a passing truck. He was killed instantly in full view of eyewitnesses. His death was the third in a series of priest murders committed under suspicious circumstances in Lithuania. The authorities were lax in investigating the murder, which dissidents maintain was the work of the KGB.

THE CATHOLIC COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF BELIEVERS' RIGHTS

Lithuania

Up to 1972, there had been no organized voice for persecuted Lithuanian Catholics in the Soviet Union. Numerous protests and petitions had been sent to Soviet officials and abroad, but with no results. On March 19, 1972, the first issue of the underground *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* appeared. It began docu-

Rev. B. Laurinavicius

The Catholic Committee

menting human rights violations around the country on a systematic basis.

In 1978, five Catholic priests went one step further by founding a Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights. The Committee's goal—to attain rights equal to those of atheists for believers. The priest members began issuing public appeals on specific cases of religious persecution.

The ranks of the Committee increased over the years, including the addition of one lay member, now in labor camp.

Two of the Committee's charter members, Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevicius, were imprisoned in 1983. Following their arrests, the remaining members came under severe government attack. They were summoned individually for questioning, asked to resign, searched and threatened with arrest.

DR. ALGIRDAS STATKEVICIUS

Confined to a Soviet Psychiatric Hospital

"There is no doubt that I am being tormented—by the KGB apparatus, the Supreme Court, and by the medical people, the psychiatrists who have lost their humanity. They are tormenting me without pity, and not a single one of them is telling me the reason why...", writes Dr. Algirdas Statkevicius from a psychiatric hospital.

He was first arrested in 1951, at the age of 28, for participation in the Lithuanian resistance movement. Statkevicius, a practicing psychiatrist, was interned in a psychiatric hospital in 1970 for his essays on political and social thought. Statkevicius also supported the Lithuanian temperance movement, something that authorities perceive as being anti-Soviet. Statkevicius' membership in the Lithuanian Helsinki Group brought about his third arrest. Labeled a "socially dangerous person" by Soviet authorities, Statkevicius was tried "in absentia" and sentenced to compulsory treatment in a psychiatric hospital.

Statkevicius, who appears to have a strong claim to U.S. citizenship, is sometimes punished with injections of powerful drugs. "If writing implements or a clean piece of paper are found in your possession, you are locked in an especially strict regimen cell and 'treated' with aminazine, i.e., treated with the psychiatrist's 'stick'," he writes. Statkevicius has complained of back problems.

Amnesty International has said that it knows of nearly 200 people forcibly confined to Soviet psychiatric hospitals for political reasons, but that it believes the real total is higher.

Statkevicius is interned in Chernyakhovsk Special Psychiatric Hospital: 238100 Kaliningradskaya obl., g. Chernyakhovsk, uchr. OM-216/st-2.

V. Skuodis

VYTAUTAS SKUODIS

American Citizen Imprisoned

Despite his legitimate claim to U.S. citizenship, Vytautas Skuodis was sentenced by a Soviet court to 7 years of strict regime labor camp and 5 years of internal exile. The Chicago-born geologist was refused the services of an American lawyer.

Among the charges under Article 68-1 of the Lithuanian SSR Criminal Code brought against the defendant were listening to foreign radio broadcasts, producing illegal literature, writing *Spiritual Genocide in Lithuania* and sending appeals abroad for help. On the day he was sentenced, he was accepted into the Catholic Committee as the first lay member.

In an interview with an Associated Press correspondent, Mrs. Irena Skuodis said of her husband, "He committed no political acts against the state. He never opposed the government. In fact he did a lot of work for the government in his job as a geologist." Plainclothes police photographed a reporter coming and going from the Skuodis home. Later that year, KGB agents knocked down the door to the Skuodis' apartment and conducted an extensive search. Mrs. Skuodis and her two daughters are under constant surveillance and threatened with imminent loss of their jobs.

Skuodis is said to have suffered a mild stroke on June 15, 1982, when he was staging a hunger strike in protest against the Soviet occupation of Lithuania. He is also suffering from heart disease. Skuodis is confined to Barashevo camp in Mordovia, about 300 miles east of Moscow.

His wife Irena Skuodiene, lives at Vandentiekio 44-4, Vilnius, Lithuania, USSR.

"Expression of opinion on economic and political questions cannot be treated as a criminal offense. The Constitution of the USSR guarantees every citizen the right to free expression of opinion and to criticism."

V. Petkus

VIKTORAS PETKUS

Human Rights Activist Imprisoned

Viktoras Petkus is widely considered to be an intellectual leader in the Lithuanian human rights movement. A graduate of the University of Vilnius and a specialist in Lithuanian literature, Petkus was barred from working in his profession due to his two prison terms on political charges. He was first arrested for Catholic youth work and then again for distributing religious literature. Petkus was arrested a third time nine months after helping to found the Lithuanian Helsinki Group. He was charged with "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda", tried in Vilnius in July 1978 and sentenced to 10 years imprisonment to be followed by 5 years internal exile.

Petkus was said to have been beaten with rubber truncheons by prison officials. Chronic malnutrition, hard physical labor and inadequate medical care give rise to concern for his health. His letters, studies in religious philosophy, are often confiscated and destroyed by camp authorities.

In one letter, Petkus writes: "A good number of the prisoners brought by hunger to the point of dehumanization, nevertheless do not lose interior freedom of spirit... I see the pale blue faces, with eyes either extinguished, or brightly burning, only not human beings, but merely combinations of skin and bones, swaying when the wind stirs..."

Congressional members of the Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe have repeatedly nominated Viktoras Petkus for the Nobel Peace Prize.

His camp address is: 618263 Permskaya obl., Chusovskoy r-n, pos. Kuchino, uchr. VS-389/36-1.

N. Sadunaite

NIJOLE SADUNAITE

Former Prisoner in Hiding

Miss Nijole Sadunaite was arrested when police raiding her home found the 11th issue of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* in her typewriter. She completed a six year term for her dissident activities.

Upon her return to Lithuania in 1980, she and her brother were subjected to intense KGB harrassment. Mail from the West was completely cut off. While Nijole was in exile, she corresponded with over 250 groups and individuals, receiving up to 20 pieces of mail every day. Nijole became known in the free world when a transcript of her trial, containing her moving defense speech, was smuggled out of the country and translated into many different languages.

Her memoirs have recently been smuggled to the West from hiding. "...Each prisoner was required to sew sixty pairs of work gloves a day. Anyone failing to fill her quota was taken to the punishment cell. The sewing machines were ancient, and would often break down. The thread was of poor quality and would snap every few minutes—sheer torture. I used to sew my quota from 6:00 AM to 11:00 PM," recounts Nijole about life in labor camp.

In November 1982, Nijole's brother, Jonas Sadunas, was interned in a psychiatric hospital. Due to Nijole's complaints and immediate public outcry in the West, he was soon released. But Nijole was again put on the government's blacklist and a criminal case was instituted against her. To avoid arrest, Nijole went into hiding. KGB agents and the militia have been unsuccessfully searching for her ever since. Her brother was falsely accused of slander and soon sentenced to a 1-½ year term in labor camp. Subsequently he was said to be undergoing medical treatment for tuberculosis.

"Loving people is the greatest love and fighting for their rights is the most beautiful love song."

The *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* has demonstrated the effectiveness of focusing public attention on human rights violations. Due to the *Chronicle*, the plight of Lithuanian Catholics has become better known world-wide.

As the only agency working full-time on behalf of Roman Catholics in the USSR, Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid strives to rally international attention and support in the free world. It has provided direct material aid to the persecuted and spoken to religious leaders, the media, legislators and human rights activists through its comprehensive Lithuanian Information Center.

This work is a source of hope for Lithuanian prisoners and their families.

The prisoners described here are among the countless victims of human rights violations. They can be helped, protected and freed. Your help is needed.

______I would like more information about Lithuanian prisoners of conscience.

______I would like more information about Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid.

______I enclose $_______ as a contribution towards the work of Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid. Please send me a sample copy of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania.*

Name ....

Address ....

City ....

State .... Zip ....

Mail to: **Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid**
351 Highland Blvd.
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11207

IN SOVIET SCHOOLS:

A LESSON IN CONTRADICTION

Lesson 1.

"The state must not concern itself with religion; religious societies must not have ties with the state government."

- Lenin, "Socialism and Religion"

Lesson 2.

"Inciting discord and hatred in connection with religious beliefs is forbidden. The Church in the USSR is separate from the state and the school from the Church."

- Constitution of the USSR, Art.52

Lesson 3.

"...in life, he will not achieve anything important if he is a believer!"

- Assistant Principal Andrijauskas
  Middle School IV,
  Telsiai, Lithuanian SSR

"...THERE IS NO GOD, LENIN TOOK CARE OF EVERYTHING!"

Mrs. Papieviene
Second Grade Teacher, Lithuanian SSR

Children learn more than their lessons in the classroom. Students in supportive environments develop the self-esteem to progress in all areas of learning. The curious child can become the creative adult—a student who is encouraged to evaluate the facts will learn sound decision-making. A positive classroom experience remains beyond the school years.

A child's education is a cooperative effort, which is influenced by parents and life outside the classroom, as well as teachers. When a child hears ideas from a teacher which are in direct conflict with those learned at home—confusion and conflict result. Imagine the plight of a child who discovers from the first day of school that he or she is an object of ridicule because the family believes in God.

In Soviet-occupied Lithuania, a nation which is still 67% Roman Catholic, a believing child faces this torment daily. Beyond this, such a child finds avenues to further opportunities closed.

In the USSR, the school has been subverted, making it the major weapon of the Soviet state in undermining a child's freedom of conscience, although such freedom, as well as separation of Church and state, is guaranteed by the Soviet Constitution. Despite these guarantees, as well as those promised in international agreements signed by the USSR, children and their parents face unremitting harrassment by teachers, administrators and government officials when they choose to exercise their rights as religious believers.

The plight of the child who believes in God is abundantly documented in the "Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania" (CCCL), an underground publication which since 1972 has accurately reported on the conditions of the Church in Lithuania today. Thus far, fifty-nine issues have reached the West. All incidents in this report are taken directly from the "Chronicle." It is also documented in various petitions by Soviet citizens, and in an appeal to UNESCO during the International Year of the Child.

Children deserve the right to realize their potential. No child should be forced to choose between personal conviction and future opportunity. Unfortunately, for the believing child in the USSR today, these expectations remain an unattainable dream.

Before Easter, 1983, Teacher (Mrs.) Bakaitiene, leader of the Pilviskai Middle School Pioneers, summoned 4th Class pupil Reda Bobinaite to the Pioneers' Room. The teacher asked whether the girl really went to church and sang in the little youth choir. When she answered affirmatively, the teacher demanded that she betray her girlfriends who go to church and sing, and tried to talk her out of going to church anymore.

—"Chronicle of the Catholic Church
in Lithuania", No. 58

Teacher (Mrs.) J. Skurskiene, of Gargzdai Middle School I, asked her sixth class pupils who of them believe in God, who is doubtful, etc. On February 2, 1982, Teacher (Miss) Bercyte of Gargzdai Middle School I, organized an anti-religious contest. Into the school auditorium, she drove fifth and sixth class students, all together, about one hundred and fifty boys and girls. All of them were told to write compositions and to draw sketches on anti-religious themes. They promised to give prizes to the best... The committee received only three drawings. No one won first prize.

—"Chronicle of the Catholic Church
in Lithuania", No. 57

"FREEDOM OF RELIGION EXISTS ONLY IN OTHER COUNTRIES, BUT NOT IN THE SOVIET UNION."

—Mrs. Laima Duliauskiene
Seventh-grade Homeroom Teacher (CCCL 37)

In 1981, (Miss) Bercyte, with the assistance of Pioneer Leaders (Miss) Sarkaite and (Miss) Labokaite, organized an anti-religious show for lower grade pupils. To act the part of a saint, the teacher had her homeroom pupil Petrosti get dressed and stand on a chair. Pioneer girls acted the parts of devout women, adoring and praying to the statue of the saint, "offering" eggs and rolls. Afterwards another student, acting the part of a drunk, knocked the "statue" over, stood up in its place himself, and ate the rolls with relish. (Gargzdai)

—"Chronicle of the Catholic Church
in Lithuania", No. 57

In 1982, Teacher (Mrs.) Freigobiene of Gargzdai Middle School I, lowered the conduct mark of one Class One student to satisfactory, just because he is not a Little Octobrist. Middle School II Teacher (Miss) Daiva Jakutyte also lowered the conduct mark of four of her homeroom students, because they would not join the Pioneers.

—"Chronicle of the Catholic Church
in Lithuania," No. 57

"IN THIS LIFE, HE WILL NOT ACHIEVE ANYTHING IMPORTANT IF HE IS A BELIEVER!"

—Asst. Principal Andrijauskas
Telsiai Middle School IV (CCCL 33)

In December, 1982, Teacher Buoziene tried, during the atheistic hour, to convince pupils that there is no God. "What we do not see, does not exist," said the teacher. One of the pupils asked, "Teacher, do we see the mind?" For this, he got a "2", and was taken to the office of the Principal, who said that he had the right not to allow children to go to church, and threatened to lower their conduct mark if they tried to tell anyone anything. (Gargzdai)

—"Chronicle of the Catholic Church
in Lithuania", No. 57

(Mrs.) M. Grieviene, Gargzdai Class 1 teacher, constantly warned, "If you go to church, I'll beat you all!" (In the past she barely survived at the school because of the beatings children got.)

—"Chronicle of the Catholic Church
in Lithuania", No. 57

In Upyna, on February 11, 1983, Teacher (Miss) Stefa Gestautaite ridiculed Second Class pupil Arkadijas Vaitkus in front of the whole class. The teacher called the pupil a "little priest," and scolded him for going to church and serving Mass. Unable to restrain herself, Teacher Gestautaite took Arkadijus by the ear and began threatening him, "If you continue to go to church, I will catch you in town and bring you to my home. Even your parents won't know where you disappeared!"

—"Chronicle of the Catholic Church
in Lithuania", No. 57

On October 29, 1982, in the Edvardas Tickus Middle School in Rokiskis, the leader of the atheist group, Teacher (Mrs.) Milda Diliene, summoned believing pupil Gita Tervydyte, Class 6C, and tried to convince her to be responsible in her class for atheism, demanding that the girl bring two books of religious content or a prayerbook. "During atheist meetings we will read the prayerbook and have a laugh at the crazy prayers," Teacher Diliene added, grinning. Gita Tervydyte refused to obey such demands of the teacher.

"Chronicle of the Catholic Church
in Lithuania," No. 56

On Sunday, October 31, 1982, during evening devotions, Teacher Milda Diliene, leader of the E. Tickus Middle School atheist group of Rokiskis, together with the leader of Pioneers at the same school, came to church spying to find out who serves at Mass. After rudely disturbing the order in church, they chased away schoolchildren who were serving at the altar during Holy Mass.

"Chronicle of the Catholic Church
in Lithuania," No. 56

On August 18, 1982, Telsiai Middle School IV eleventh-grader Danute Adomaityte was summoned to Telsiai Security Headquarters for questioning. The chekist was most worried whether the girl summoned was preparing to enter the convent and whether the landladies of the apartment she was renting were not religious women. The chekist advised her that rather than religion and church going, it was better to enjoy the pleasures of life.

"If you do not change your way of life, we will meet during the school year," the security agent threatened.

—"Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania," No. 55

On September 23, 1982, Teacher (Mrs) Ona Adomaitiene of Pakirsinys Elementary School asked third grade pupils during class what pollutes and infects the skin. The teacher explained that the greatest source of skin infection is holy water in the churches.

—"Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania," No. 55

"EITHER JOIN THE COMMUNIST YOUTH LEAGUE OR LEAVE OUR SCHOOL!"

—Teacher to 9th Class girl (CCCL 38)

On September 2, 1982, tenth-grader (Miss) Saule Gaizauskaite of Telsiai Middle School VI was summoned to the Vice Principal's office. In the office, the girl found a chekist waiting for her. He tried to talk her out of going to church or participating in adoration groups. The KGB man was especially angry for her participation in the religious festival at Zemaiciu Kalvarija.

"You are a minor. Soviet law forbids minors from participating in processions. Since you have broken the law, you are a criminal. If you do not stop, we will take you from your parents and bring you up in a colony," the chekist threatened.

The chekist considers one of Saule Gaizauskaite's greatest crimes to be her participation in the church choir.

—"Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania," No. 55

At the end of February, Luoke Middle School Principal Limantas summoned the grandmother who was raising the five Kikilus grandchildren and threatened her: "If your grandchildren continue to go to church and hang around the altar, they will be taken away from you and turned over to the state to rear."

—"Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania," No. 54

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

You can express your opinion of these incidents, which represent only a small sample of day-to-day life in the Soviet Lithuanian classroom. Write today to:

The Secretary General
The United Nations
New York, N.Y. 10017

Mission of the USSR to
the UN
136 E. 67 Street
New York, N.Y. 10021

UNESCO
The United Nations
New York, N.Y. 10017

YOU CAN EXPRESS YOUR CONCERN DIRECTLY TO THOSE TEACHERS WHO ARE USING THE SCHOOLS TO DENY FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE TO THEIR STUDENTS, IN VIOLATION OF THE SOVIET CONSTITUTION.

1. Write in any language.
2. Question his/her use of the classroom to embarrass students about their personal beliefs.
3. Address the letter as follows:

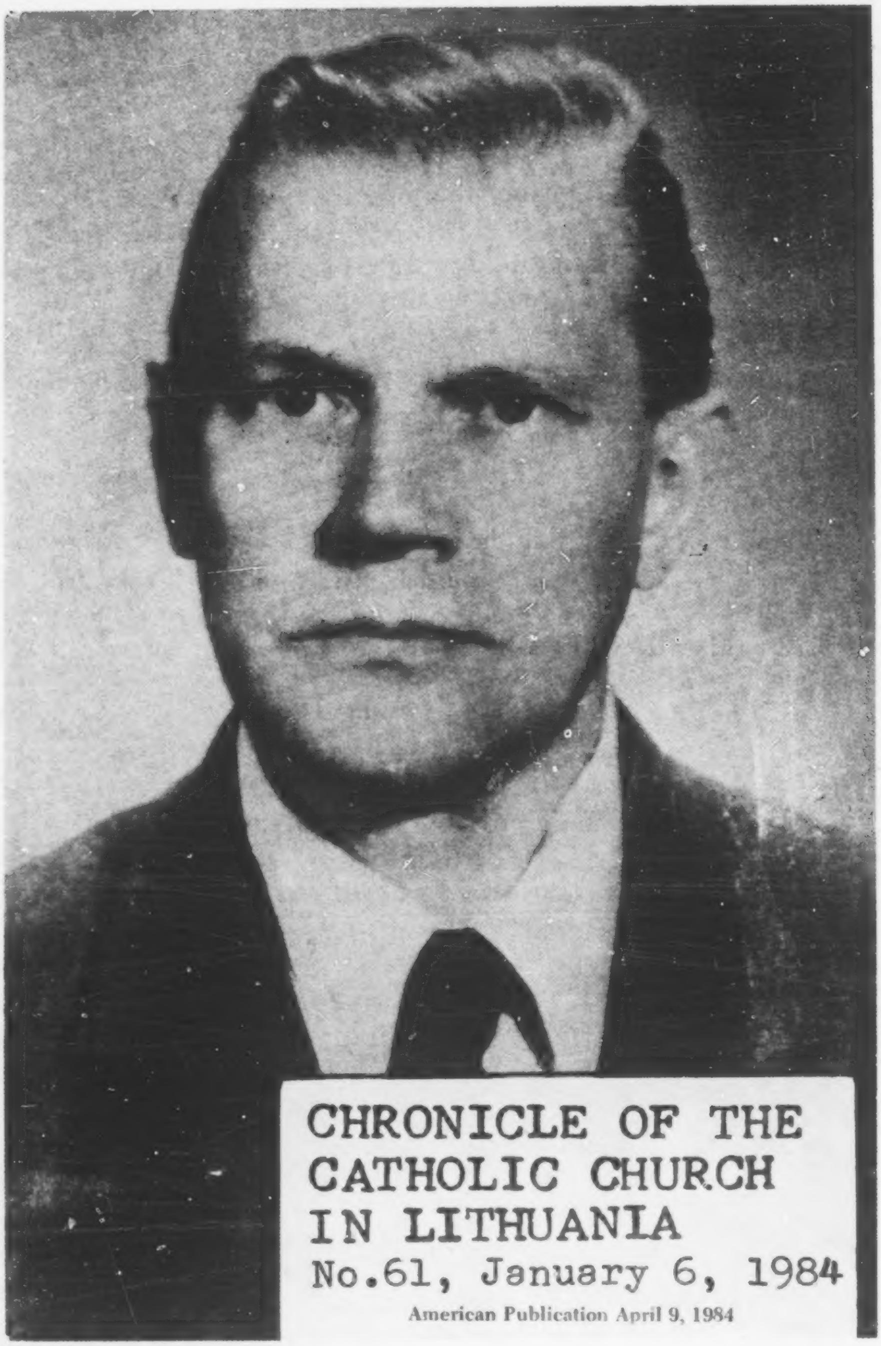
    Name of the teacher/administrator
    Name of the school
    Town
    Lithuania SSR

The Soviet Union is concerned lest events such as these reach the West. **YOUR LETTER WILL HELP A CHILD!**

- For a complimentary copy of the Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania—
- For additional ways in which you can help—
- To send a tax-deductible contribution,

WRITE TO:

Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid
351 Highland Blvd.
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11207



CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA

No.61, January 6, 1984

American Publication April 9, 1984

CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA, No. 61

A Translation of the Complete Lithuanian Original
LIETUVOS KATALIKŲ BAŽNYČIOS KRONIKA Nr. 61
Documenting the Struggle for Human Rights
In Soviet-Occupied Lithuania Today

Translated by: Rev. Casimir Pugevičius
Translation Editor: Marian Skabeikis
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COVER: Jonas Sadūnas, brother of Nijolė Sadūnaitė. He is serving an eighteen month term under fabricated "slander" charges.

CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA No. 61

Introduction

In 1940, when the Soviet Union occupied Lithuania by force, 85.5% of the country's more than 3 million inhabitants were Roman Catholic, 4.5% Protestant, 7.3% Jewish, 2.5% Orthodox and 0.2% of other persuasions.

In the two archdioceses and four dioceses were: 708 churches, 314 chapels, 73 monasteries, 85 convents, three archbishops, nine bishops, 1271 diocesan priests, 580 monks, of whom 168 were priests. Four seminaries had 470 students. There were 950 nuns.

Nuns cared for 35 kindergartens, 10 orphanages, 25 homes for the aged, two hospitals, a youth center, and an institute for the deaf-mute.

On June 15, 1940, the Red Army marched into Lithuania; the independent government was replaced by a puppet regime.

On July 14-15, rigged elections were staged. On July 21, with the Red Army surrounding the assembly house, the new People's Diet "unanimously" declared Lithuania a Soviet Socialist Republic.

On June 25, 1940, the Church was declared separate from the state, and the representative of the Holy See was expelled.

Parish lands were confiscated, clergy salaries and pensions were cut off, and their savings confiscated. Churches were deprived of support. Catholic printing plants were confiscated, and religious books destroyed.

On June 28, 1940, the teaching of religion and recitation of prayers in schools was forbidden. The University's Department of Theology and Philosophy was abolished, and all private schools were nationalized. The seminaries at Vilkaviškis and Telšiai were closed, and the seminary at Kaunas was permitted to operate on a very limited scale. The clergy were spied upon constantly.

On June 15, 1941, 34,260 Lithuanians were packed off in cattle-cars to undisclosed points in the Soviet Union. After World War II, the mass deportations resumed and continued until 1953.

Vincentas Borisevičius, Bishop of Telšiai, was arrested on February 3, 1946, and condemned to death after a secret trial. Before year's end, his auxiliary, Bishop Pranas Ramanauskas, was also arrested and deported to Siberia. Bishop Teofilius Matulionis of Kaišiadorys and Archbishop Mečislovas Reinys of Vilnius were deported to a Siberian labor camp. Archbishop Reinys perished in prison at Vladimir, November 8, 1953. By 1947, Lithuania was left with a single bishop, Kazimieras Paltarokas, of Panevėžys. He died in 1958.

In 1947, the last convents and monasteries were closed, their communities dispersed, and all monastic institutions were outlawed.

After Stalin's death in 1953, there was a slight improvement in the religious situation. Bishops Matulionis and Ramanauskas were allowed to return to Lithuania, but not to minister to their dioceses or to communicate with the clergy or laity.

Bishop Ramanauskas died in 1959, and Archbishop Matulionis in 1963.

In 1955, two new bishops were appointed by Rome and consecrated: Julijonas Steponavičius and Petras Maželis. Steponavičius has never been permitted to administer his diocese.

Bishop Vincentas Sladkevičius, consecrated in 1957, was kept under severe government restrictions until 1982. In 1965, Monsignor Juozas Labukas-Matulaitis was consecrated in Rome to head the Archdiocese of Kaunas and the Diocese of Vilkaviškis. Two new bishops were consecrated in 1969: Bishop Romualdas Krikščiūnas was appointed Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Panevėžys, and Bishop Liudvikas Povilonis was appointed auxiliary to Bishop Labukas, and succeeded him after his death in 1979.

In 1982, Bishop Sladkevičius was permitted to return to his diocese as Apostolic Administrator of Kaišiadorys. Father Antanas Vaičius was named bishop and Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Telšiai and the Prelature of Klaipėda.

Relaxation of pressure on religious believers soon revealed that the Lithuanian people were still deeply religious. It was decided in the mid-fifties to resume the attack. The principal means of attack would be unlimited moral pressure, since physical terror seemed only to strengthen and unify the faithful.

In 1972, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania,* clandestinely published in that country, began to reach the free world at irregular intervals. Primarily intended to keep Catholics in Lithuania informed of the situation of the Church there, these Lithuanian *samizdat* also serve as a constant appeal to the free world not to forget the plight of a people struggling against overwhelming odds to defend their religious beliefs and to regain their basic human rights.

Rev. Casimir Pugevičius
Translator

Read this and pass it on!
Appearing since 1972

CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA, No. 61

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Lithuania ... January 6, 1984

TO OUR DEAR BRETHREN, THE IRISH

It was especially good and pleasant to hear over Vatican Radio that the faithful of faraway Ireland are praying for our nation.

We believe in the power of common prayer. Many of the faithful, hearing about the days of prayer for Lithuania which had been proclaimed, immediately joined in the common prayer in Lithuania, as well.

Gathering in spirit at the feet of our Good Mother, we felt comforted and strengthened.

The Lithuanians will never forget your nation's gift, the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. From the time that the statue arrived at our shrine in Šiluva, on the thirteenth of every month, the devotees of Mary gather here, and their numbers are constantly growing.

On that day, Mass is solemnly concelebrated, sermons are preached and many people go to the sacraments.

If our priests and faithful are going bravely to prison, risking the loss of good positions, and little schoolchildren are resisting the derision of their fellow pupils, obvious discrimination by teachers and KGB treachery, it is only because someone is sacrificing the praying for our nation. So we sincerely thank you for the prayers and for the love which you show us!

May God reward you!

THE SPIRITUAL TESTAMENT OF FATHER SIGITAS TAMKEVIČIUS

After the official warning by the prosecutor in 1979 to Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevičius, the stream of unofficial threats and rumors increased. It was said that the KGB had secretly decided to kill them by setting up an accident, or in some similar fashion. Throughout Lithuania, rumors flew that Fathers Svarinskas and Tamkevičius had already been injured in an accident, arrested and that searches had been made of their residences.

People hearing those rumors often warned the priests not to drive about at night alone, and to avoid all sorts of traps. KGB agents did not hesitate to telephone the priests and to threaten them with violence. Those rumors were probably spread by the KGB especially to intimidate the fearful.

Father Sigitas Tamkevičius

The situation became such that more zealous priests could expect all sorts of unforseen incidents at any moment.

The KGB constantly bragged that it had all sorts of means of affecting even a person's mind. This was confirmed in part by "fixing" the Orthodox priest, Dmitri Dudko, and other prisoners.

Therefore, on February 6, 1982, Father Sigitas Tamkevičius wrote his spiritual testament:

My Credo

More and more often, I hear threats that I am to be arrested. I believe that the KGB threats can become a reality.

Perhaps the security organs will try to force me, as they did the Orthodox priest, Dmitri Dudko, to recant my activities as a crime against the state and the people. Who can guarantee in advance that he will be able to resist all of the means available to the KGB, and will not break? In the Gulag hell, thousands have caved in! Therefore, at this time, while I am free, I wish to express my *credo*.

I saw lying, decit and moral decay, so I could not remain uncommitted. The desire to see my fellow countrymen happy here and in eternity forced me to struggle against all that evil which burdens my homeland and my Church.

To this struggle, I have devoted the most fruitful years of my life.

I thank God that during the past decade, He has allowed me to work with good results for the Church and, by the same token, for my country. If I had it to do all over again, I would do the same thing, except perhaps, more zealously. I regret only that most likely, I could have done even more.

It is with a peaceful heart that I go to prison; let it be the crowning of my work. My years of imprisonment, I dedicate as a penance for my own mistakes, and for the future of the Church and of our homeland. Everything that I shall suffer, I offer for my beloved fellow countrymen, that they would remain faithful to God and country, that not one of them would go the way of Judas.

I desire, especially, that the ecclesiastical hierarchy in Lithuania which is pressured by the KGB more than anyone, would preserve this loyalty. For my brother priests, I will pray God for the grace of unity: Unity with Christ, with the Church, with the Pope, but not with the KGB and not with the Council for Religious Affairs.

In prison, I will always pray the Lord for the sisters of Lithuania who have dedicated their lives to God and to the loving service of people, that they would devote great attention to the struggle for the freedom of the Church, and for basic human rights. Do not believe it when propagandists for government atheism say that such activity is political. It is not politics, but a matter of life and death for all of us. And if it is politics, then it is Church politics, it is papal politics.

I will carry in my heart all those dear faithful of Lithuania with whom I came into contact during my twenty years as a priest. Remain faithful to Christ and the homeland! Bring up children who will not bow to lies and coercion. Let them create a more rational and healthy society than the one in which you must live.

I believe that others will continue our work and struggle, only perhaps more zealously and fruitfully than I or my friends were able. If anyone says, "You cannot knock a hole in the wall with your head", do not believe such pessimism. The wall of lying and coercion is rotten, and with the help of Christ, it is possible to overcome all things.

If you ever hear me speaking otherwise, do not believe it, because it will be not I speaking, but a poor man broken by the KGB.

February 6, 1982 Father Sigitas Tamkevičius

THE TRIAL OF FATHER SIGITAS TAMKEVIČIUS

On November 29, 1983, in the Supreme Court of the LSSR in Vilnius, the trial of the Pastor of the parish of Kybartai, member of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights, Father Sigitas Tamkevičius began. For this judicial doing-in of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, the KGB prepared very carefully, in advance. During the summer, diocesan chanceries received written instructions forbidding the collection outside churches of signatures to protest and petitions.

The Chief Judge of the Supreme Court, speaking over Lithuanian television, threatened penalties for those collecting signatures and even for those signing. The KGB, in more than one place, took direct brutal action against those collecting signatures. Several times, disinformation was spread among the people to the effect that the trial had taken place outside Vilnius, and Father Tamkevičius had been sentenced to twelve years. Hence, many people, hearing about the correct date for the trial, thought they were being misled and they arrived late for the trial, or never came.

With the approach of the trial date, most organizations were warned that at the end of November and the beginning of December, they should not let their employees off from work. Some students, and pupils of special schools, were warned by the school administration that if they wished to avoid unpleasantness, and wanted to continue their studies, they should not attend the trial, but should postpone even personal business in the area of Vilnius.

In health care facilities, strict monitoring of written excuses from work was introduced. Priests and lay people sympathetic to Father Sigitas Tamkevičius were warned in advance not to attend the trial, or else during the trial, they were summoned to various agencies under one pretext or another (some of them for interrogation).

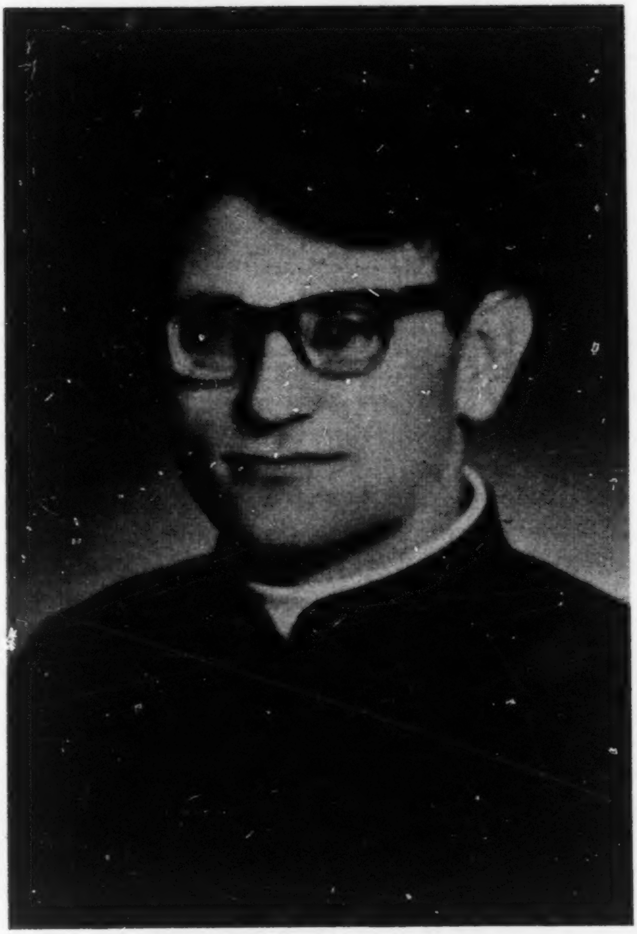
Even Father Tamkevičius' brothers were not informed about the "public" trial. During the trial, only three brothers of Father Tamkevičius were admitted into the courtroom. The chekists would not admit to the courtroom his sister-in-law, who had raised Sigitas Tamkevičius, orphaned from childhood; in their opinion, a brother's wife is not a relative.

During the trial, all the churches of Vilnius and the surrounding area were kept under surveillance by the KGB. In order not to attract attention, the sidewalk in front of the courthouse, contrary to procedure during the trial of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas, was clear. Almost everyone who came was allowed into the courthouse vestibule, where officials would politely announce to them that they should not bother, but should go home, because they would not be allowed into the courtroom ("There is no room"!)

If they came back, the militia and KGB would place them in vehicles like people under arrest, and take them for interrogation to the Militia Department, where they sentenced them to jail, or having detained them until closing time and warning them not to show their faces in Vilnius during the trial, they would take them to bus terminals or railroad stations. In just this way, Father Antanas Jokubauskas, Pastor of Pociunėlė, was detained.

The priests: Pastor of Griškabūdis, Father Vytautas Užkuraitis, and the Associate Pastor of Alytus, Father Antanas Gražulis, were warned that if they did not leave the vestibule they would be detained. Father Jonas Boruta was detained on the street by officials, and then driven to the *Rayon* of Lenin Militia Station, where he was interrogated for several hours by militia functionaries. Similarly detained was Father Jonas Kauneckas.

The priests and faithful who came for the trial each day used to gather at the shrine of Aušros Vartai (Our Lady of the Dawn Gate), and in the Church of Saint Theresa nearby, where they would pray almost the whole day: They would assist at Holy Mass, make the Way of the Cross, recite the rosary and sing hymns. During the trial, the faithful were joined in prayer at Aušros Vartai and Saint Theresa's by the priests: Canon Bronius Antanaitis, Algimantas Keina, Vaclovas Stakėnas, Rokas Puzonas, Vytautas Užkuraitis, Gvidonas Dovidaitis, Jonas Kauneckas, Vincas Vėlavičius, Antanas Gražulis, Jonas Boruta, Antanas Jokubauskas, Leonas Kalinauskas, Juozas Zdebskis,



Father Jonas Kauneckas

Petras Našlėnas, Mykolas Petravičius, Edmundas Paulionis and others.

While praying, the little group of faithful which sometimes totalled about one hundred people, was under constant surveillance by the KGB, or agents they sent. On November 1, 1983, the Commisioner for Religious Affairs, Petras Anilionis, telephoned Father Algirdas Gutauskas, the Administrator of the Archdiocese of Vilnius, demanding that he "straighten things out" at Aušros Vartai, and Saint Theresa's Church.

All those attempting to approach the Supreme Court chambers were treated exactly as people had been during the trial of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas.

On November 29, the first day of the trial, the following were detained in front of the Supreme Court chambers: the Misses Aldona Šukytė, Bronė Valaitytė, Genovaitė Navickaitė, Janina Judikevičiūtė, Giedrė Striokaitė and Romutė Tamašauskaitė. Before they even had a chance to find out whether Father Sigitas Tamkevičius was really being tried, officials flooded them with questions: "Where are you from?" "Why are you here?" "Do you have permission?" "Your name?", etc.

When the women explained that they had come for the trial of Father Tamkevičius, and requested to be allowed into the courtroom, or at least stay a while in the vestibule to warm up, an order was given to detain them all. Seating them in a bus, the officials carried out a preliminary investigation: They checked their passports, asked from where and why they had come, and took down the information several times over. The six women detained were guarded by thirteen uniformed and civilian officials. Finally, they took them to the "Training School for Junior and Middle-Level Worker-Leaders" in Valakampiai, where they spent the whole time interrogating and lecturing them

The chekists were interested in the following questions: "Do you know the priest on trial?" "Where do your parents end other members of your family live and work?" "With whom do you live yourself?" "How much do you earn?", etc. After they had questioned the women, one of the KGB agents threatened that if they were seen once more outside the courthouse, stricter measures would be taken. At 5:00 PM, they were brought to the bus station; only after lengthy discussion were the women allowed to to to Aušros Vartai. That day, everyone approaching the courthouse was stopped and turned back.

On November 30, the following again were detained on the street, even before they had a chance to approach the courthouse: Bronė Valaitytė, Aldona Šukytė, Algimantas Patackas and Janina Judikevičiūtė.

Aldona Šukytė was segregated, taken to the Militia Station and sentenced to five days in jail. The others were taken outside the city limits and kept in militia facilities until 5:00 PM. They were all warned before two witnesses, that if they showed up once more in front of the courthouse, sterner measures would be taken.

Those detained refused to acknowledge the warning in writing; the witnesses signed in their stead.

The morning of December 1, Kaunas resident, Miss Joana Bukaveckaitė, was detained and interrogated by the KGB. About noon, a larger group of people was detained. They were all interrogated by the KGB. Officials took Bronė Valaitytė, resident of Sasnava, and Janina Judikevičiūtė, a resident of Kapsukas, to the *Rayon* of Lenin Militia Department, and sentenced them to ten days in jail.

Those who received jail sentences were kept in unsanitary conditions . . . The color of the floor could not be seen in places on account of the dirt, and in spots, it was completely black. Those under sentence had to sleep on that floor. No one gave them anything to spread under them, or to cover themselves. They did not get a towel or a piece of paper. They were allowed to go to the toilet twice a day. In the corner of the cell the whole time stood a malodorous pot with an ill-fitting lid. Not only the air, but even the walls of the cell were permeated with the peculiar stench. The cell doors were opened only twice a day, for a few minutes at a time. The ventilator was turned on once a day, for just a few minutes, and sometimes, not even that much.

Presiding over the trial was Assistant Chief Justice of the LSSR Supreme Court, Ignotas. The Prosecutor was Jurgis Bakučionis. At the beginning of the proceedings, a secretary spent about two and a half hours reading the indictment against Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, including: organizing the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights; drafting its documents and sending them abroad, and to the underground publication, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*; sermons of an incriminating nature, delivered on various occasions, in about fifteen separate places; group instruction of children; organizing an All Souls' procession to the cemetery; assistance to prisoners; organizing a Christmas party for children, etc.

After the indictment had been read, the judge turned to Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, asking whether he pleaded guilty. The accused did not plead guilty, and spoke in detail and with logical arguments for almost two hours, rebutting all of the court's accusations. In his speech, Father Tamkevičius emphasized: "For six months, seven well-qualified interrogators questioned me, and not one of them could prove that I was involved in anti-Soviet activity, nor was I involved in such, but only defended the rights of believers."

To the accusation that he had assisted prisoners, the defendant answered, "To me, those who have been sentenced for religious beliefs are not convicts, but brothers and sisters!" He also recalled that during the preliminary investigation, he had constant headaches. (A regular phenomenon with those who have spent time in the KGB cellars. — Ed. Note)

After the lunch break, the judge, unable to contain himself, noted, "After listening to all this, Defendant Tamkevičius, it appears that we arrested you on a whim, accidentally, and not as a criminal."

Twenty-eight witnesses were called to testify, three of whom did not show up for the trial. Most of them, except for Fathers Algimantas Keina and Vaclovas Stakėnas, two witnesses from Kybartai, and one other, were KGB agents or their collaborators. Witnesses for the accused were questioned at the end of the session on the 30th, so to all intents and purposes, they hardly spent any time in the courtroom. Some of the witnesses for Father Sigitas Tamkevičius refused to swear in writing that they would tell the truth. One woman from Kybartai stated, "I will not sign, because I am convinced that the signatures of believers have no meaning. About seventy thousand of the faithful signed on behalf of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas and Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, but no one paid attention to that." To the admonition of the court that the same laws applied to believers as to others, and she had to sign, the witness replied that here in this court, her conscience did not allow her to sign.

The witnesses spoke mostly about Father Tamkevičius' sermons. Almost all of them "just happened" to drop into church and, having their tape recorders with them, taped the sermons. They all spoke quietly, so that it was difficult for those sitting in the courtroom to hear anything, all the more, to find out the witnesses' names.

At the end of the session on the 30th, the chief judge announced that "Witnesses will not be allowed into court tomorrow", even though the law provides that witnesses after testifying have the right to remain in the courtroom, and if any of them wish to leave, they must ask the prosecutor and the defense attorney whether they would be needed.

After the questioning of witnesses, the documents of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights and other evidence, twenty-three volumes in all, were considered. To the question how the documents of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights came into Yakunin's possession in Moscow, and who had translated them, the priest replied, "I won't answer. First, I don't consider that the translator committed a crime, and secondly, I'm going back. I'll have to resume my work. How will people come to me to confession and what will they think of me if I betray those who are innocent?"

The court, in disclosing and considering evidence against the accused, (e.g. the documents of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights) did not read a single document, or excerpts, but satisfied itself with announcing the number of the document and indicating where they were located in the file. Constantly repeated were generalities, "The speaker had a tendentious idea", or, "He asked people to fight the Soviet system".

Father Sigitas Tamkevičius' Defense Speech

"I will not burden you with a long speech, even though it would be possible to say much more," spoke Father Tamkevičius. "Prosecutor Bakučionis told you that my file consists of twenty-three volumes of incriminating material, and it would have been possible to fill up twenty-three more volumes. So whether, I speak much or little will not make any difference. I feel 'not guilty' (Father Tamkevičius would always come into court in a positive mood, smiling, calm and resolute. — Ed. Note). I did everything required of me as a priest. In the Gospel it says that when they were trying Christ, He did not defend Himself. I am a mere priest, and I wish to follow His example. Today my hands are tied, do with me what you will!" (Oral report of the defense speech.)

Prosecutor Bakučionis demanded six years of strict regime camp and four years of exile, under Par. 68,Id.

Father Sigitas Tamkevičius' Final Statement

" . . . While I was studying at the seminary, my health deteriorated. I thought that I would be unable to continue studies. After two years, they called me up for the army. During the three years of military service, I got well, and succeeded in finishing the seminary. I worked as much as I could, and tried to perform my duties as a priest well. In 1969, they took away my certification as a priest. Many thought that would obstruct me, but on the contrary, everything turned out for the good.

"Lately, my health has seriously deteriorated . . . and on May 6, they arrested me . . . Once, while talking with a Soviet official, I asked, 'What do you personally think of me?' He replied, 'No offense, but I see you as a very shrewd operator, for whom everything succeeded well for a very long time.'

"No, I am not a 'shrewd operator', I am a disciple of Christ, a priest. I love God and people: the elderly and the little ones, the youth — for whom I have given my whole life, and if necessary, later, I will sacrifice my life. I worked wherever God sent me, and now He is sending me where I am most needed. Today, too, He is transferring me from one place to another. I try to accept all the crosses of life from the hand of God, so I accept this cross also, embrace it and kiss it. Praise to Jesus Christ and Mary!" (The final statement orally reported.)

At 3:00 PM on December 2, the decision was handed down, according to which Father Sigitas Tamkevičius was sentenced to six years strict regime camp and four years exile.

To: The Prosecutor General of the USSR
Copy to: The Chief Prosecutor of the LSSR
From: Aldona Šukytė, daughter of Povilas,
residing at Biržiai, Vytauto 15-8

Bronislava Valaitytė, daughter of Jeronimas,
residing at Kapsuko *Raj.*, Sasnava
Janina Judikevičiūtė, daughter of Jurgis,
residing at Kapsukas, Sporto 14-6

A Petition

In Vilnius, during the trial of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, before we could even approach the LSSR Supreme Court building, just because we wanted to attend the trial of the accused priest, we were detained and given:

November 30, 1983 — Aldona Šukytė, five days in jail
December 1, 1983 — Bronislava Valaitytė and Janina Judikevičiūtė, ten days in jail.

Such behavior on the part of the KGB is clear proof that an innocent man was being tried, for justice does not fear publicity.

Locked in a cell, although innocent, like the priests who had been sentenced, we have decided to substitute for Father Alfonsas Svarinskas and Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, taking their places in labor camp. Each of us agrees to serve the sentence of both priests together, that is, thirteen years of strict regime camp and seven years of exile.

Prosecutor General, return to Lithuania these priests who have not committed any crime. If you need Christian blood, let us substitute for these priests, so necessary to our nation, and let us serve their entire sentence.

December 15, 1983

On December 15, 1983, Aldona Šukytė, Bronislava Valaitytė and Janina Judikevičiūtė sent one more petition to the Prosecutor General, in which they protested against the fabrication of the KGB agents. In their petition, they write: "During the trial of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, November 29, 1983 — December 2, 1983, we were detained before we even reached the Supreme Court, and were taken to the Militia Station where the court sentenced us to jail. We have not committed any crime. As we were leaving, we asked what we had served sentence for. It was explained that we had pushed militiamen and had tried to force our way into the courtroom. Since nothing of the sort happened, we express our strongest protest against such a shameless lie."

THOUGHTS ON READING THE ARTICLE, "A ROSARY IN ONE HAND AND A STICK IN THE OTHER"

In the notes of the Servant of God, Archbishop Matulaitis, we read, "Our Church suffered so much under the Czar, and now, there are new sufferings, and those, in the name of freedom of conscience. Oh God, how strange this world is . . . Those same people who, not of the press, now allow no newspapers with different point of view . . . those people who so fervently demanded freedom of assembly and association, and freedom of speech, now refuse to allow a person with different opinions even to open his mouth . . . They once demanded equal rights, and now, they recognize them only for their side. How often the wild outlaws' rule of justice is applied here." (*Notes*, 174-175).

Perhaps nowhere in the world is there so much talk about all sorts of freedoms as in the Soviet Union, and nowhere are they so crudely violated as in that same Soviet Union. L. Boerne has said, "There is not a man who would not love freedom, but the just man demands it for everyone, and the unjust man, only for himself." The whole world understands freedom of religion as follows, "If you want to — believe; if you don't want to — don't believe." By the same token, you are not constrained to do everything which is associated with the practice of religion, or its disuse.

Among us, freedom of conscience is explained as follows: "According to the proletarian Marxist understanding of freedom of conscience, freedom of atheism is the freedom for every citizen to escape from religious illusions, to develop a scientific Marxist worldview, and to lead one's life by it, without interference . . . as long as the believer has not shaken off religious illusions, there cannot be complete freedom of conscience. In conditions of the socialist system, by the concept, 'complete freedom of conscience', one wishes only to signify the greatest achievement in the war for man's escape from superstition. Complete freedom of conscience will be attained in Communist society." (*Soviet Laws Regarding Religious Cults and Freedom of Conscience).*

After reading all that, it is not difficult to understand how the atheists demand and, in practice, recognize freedom only for themselves. Their "justice" can be seen and encountered everywhere, beginning with routine persecution of believers, and ending with shameful judicial disposals. After the trial of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas, a long article appeared in the press. In it, Father Svarinskas was called a bandit, or most benignly speaking, an accessory or messenger.

In the first place, we would like to suggest that the author of the article pick up the *Dictionary of International Terms*, and take a good look at the difference between the words, "bandit", "banditry", and "partisan". However, this is not the point. The question is why it was so important to call Father Svarinskas a bandit in the press. It is not so difficult to understand. The KGB had its purpose! To denigrate, in the eyes of believers as well as unbelievers, a priest especially respected and loved by the people, as if to say, "We do not try innocent people!"

It would be naive to think that after such an article, the authority and popularity of Father Svarinskas diminished. And even if it had, then it was only in the eyes of those brothers and sisters to whom neither God nor country is important, since their thoughts can only center around a narrow, personal, material world.

With the arrest of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, speculation could be heard among the people: "What will they try him for, and what will the press dare to write about Father Sigitas? After all, during the unquiet post-War years, he was still a child." While some affirmed that even the most inventive writers would be unable to think up enough material to accuse Father Tamkevičius, others, more experienced, asserted that the Soviet propagandists would think of something to denigrate even this priest, who in everyone's opinion is just decent and zealous.

The latter were not mistaken. No sooner was the trial over, than the next day, *Tiesa (Truth)* immediately came out with Reporter (Mrs.) S. Mockuvienė's article ominously entitled: "A Rosary in One Hand and a Stick in the Other".

The "truth" of the article is witnessed by its opening sentences: "True, Father Sigitas Tamkevičius in the past did not associate with the bourgeois nationalist gangs. He did not bless their bloody 'escapades', he did not conceal bandits' weapons in church basements, as did, for instance, Alfonsas Svarinskas himself."

We would like to ask Reporter Mockuvienė to specify in which church basements Father Svarinskas hid bandits' (partisans' — Ed. Note) weapons, and what escapades of theirs he blessed, if he was in prison from 1946 - 1956, and was ordained a priest only on October 3, 1954, in the special camp in Abez.

To give the article weight, crude libel is employed. Thus, after reading the first few sentences, it is not difficult to see in what style the whole article is written.

One reading the article notices that the writer does not mention the makeup of the court and she conceals the names of practically all the witnesses. Just from the official report in the press, it is clear how bombastic and juridically unfounded is the accusation against Father Tamkevičius of anti-social and anti-Soviet activity. Here is what the author of the article, S. Mockuvienė, mentions: He is accused "of performing religious ceremonies outside the house of prayer". As such ceremonies in practice can be considered the following: ministry to the sick (at home and in the hospital), All Souls' processions and funeral processions to the cemetery, the blessing of a cross, a home or apartment, etc.

But all these activities are just the day-to-day embodiment of religious freedom, which is guaranteed by the International Declaration of Human Rights and the Constitution of the land. The author further explains that Father Tamkevičius "regularly incited believers to disobey" such restrictions, and affirms that religious ceremonies may be carried out only in the house of prayer, when even the Regulations for Religious Associations say that religious ceremonies may be carried out in churches (houses of prayer), the churchyard or the cemetery.

Understanding human nature correctly — because the rights which every state regardless of its ideology must guarantee, this priest sought that the believing segment of society might realistically make use of their constitutional rights as citizens, and their natural religious rights as humans, without transgressing ecclesiastical or national traditions. (sic) Besides, the Church itself obliges priests and faithful to go to cemeteries on All Souls', and to pray there. But on what basis can the accusation of "anti-social" and "anti-Soviet" activity be levelled here, when we are speaking of blessing apartments and visiting hospitals?

By its very essence, this is a private matter. Further, Reporter S. Mockuvienė brings up in her article as a crime, "the group teaching of children". What is the difference whether it is group or individual? After all, they are all being taught the same religion. If the right to teach children their parents' religion is left as such in the Constitution, and if parents teaching their children do not essentially break the law, then they also do not transgress it when they wish to teach their children religion in the best way possible. So what does the priest do wrong when in making use of that same constitutional freedom, he helps parents to do so?

AFTER ALL, THAT IS THE FIRST DUTY OF THE PRIEST. Perhaps the essence of this accusation lies in the words, "RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF CHILDREN". The atheists often call that a crime, and offer as an argument the constitutional law that the Church is separated from the school. But what does this have in common with transgression of the law, e.g., with the establishing of religious schools or the introduction of compulsory religious education? Can every lesson be called a school?

In the article, Father Sigitas Tamkevičius is accused of urging the faithful in the church of Šlavantai not to let their children be signed up for atheistic organizations designated for unbelievers. As a matter of fact, the teachers themselves should be in favor of this, if they are truly concerned that their pupils not grow up as hypocrites. Mrs. Mockuvienė, in her article, clearly admits that in

Soviet Lithuania, it is considered a crime to write petitions, or to gather signatures for them.

The writer finds yet another crime: "At the end of last year, he announced in a sermon that he was organizing a children's Christmas party in the churchyard, invited the parishioners to bring their children, and, in addition, obtained the help of a couple of priests." Has it ever been heard anywhere in the world, except in such a "free" country as Lithuania, that the organizing of a children's Christmas party and asking the help of priest friends be considered a crime against the state . . . to be specifically included when talking about a penalty of strict regime labor camp and four years of exile?

Reporter Mockuvienė very often mentions that Father Sigitas Tamkevičius engaged in libel and denigrated Soviet reality, while at the same time, admitting that the convict never uttered and never wrote a word directly against the Soviet government: "Father Sigitas Tamkevičius knew well that speaking openly against the Soviet government, he would gain nothing . . . his sermons are full of veiled references to the damage caused by atheism." Thus, it is interesting that there is no need to denigrate Soviet reality — it is enough merely to know and tell the truth about it in order to be called a state criminal.

It would be interesting to know what Mrs. Mockuvienė has in mind when she writes, "Respect for other people, the right to an education . . . and other social privileges always were and are accessible to all, equally." What does she consider those readers of her article to be, who know many instances of discrimination and have themselves experienced many injustices, just because they dare to show that they are practicing believers? The writer will perhaps try to rest her arguments on one or the other witness who is said to have denied some of the examples of persecution brought up in the *Chronicle*. It is not difficult for one living in Soviet Lithuania to understand how the witnesses were "found" and "made". Not all of the victims are able to withstand the pressure of the KGB. When threatened with with expulsion from work or school, some may even recant earlier true testimony.

After all, everyone knows well how the KGB chooses its witnesses. It was in this fashion that the witnesses were chosen prior to the trial of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas: Government officials would summon an employee and tell him what he would have to say in giving testimony during the priest's trial. Witnesses were

On June 6, 1983, following the arrest of their pastor, Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, the parishioners of Kybartai went in kneeling procession around their church.

chosen in the same way for the t[illegible] of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius. When Father Tamkevičius was arrested, scores of witnesses were summoned, but not one of them got to watch the trial, even though they wanted to, and tried. Why were they not allowed into the courtroom?

About 70,000 of the faithful signed protests and petitions saying that the disposal of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius was a crude crime, but no one paid any attention to that. If we are speaking, not of a criminal offense, but of social, religious and political activity, then surely, the protest of almost 70,000 signatories against the accusations aimed at Father Sigitas Tamkevičius are witness enough to judge the criminal nature of the priest's activity.

To defend one who owes support, a thief or a hooligan from criminal liability, a petition or guarantee from a score or so of members of a collective often suffices. But to help an innocent priest on trial, whose "Christmas party", "organizing of processions" or "collective teaching of children" displeased the

KGB, the witness of tens of thousands of people is not enough.

Father Tamkevičius' ties with the underground publication, the *Chronicle,* "proven by facts", remain unclear to the reader, since Reporter Mockuvienė did not deign to reveal a single one of those "facts", and testimony about the lack of basis for information disseminated in the *Chronicle* is more than ridiculous, if one knows the whole system. For example, one can cite the incident in the article on the Šaukėnai Middle School: Summoned to testify at the trial was not the offended pupil, but the teacher who lowered his conduct mark.

So when Father Tamkevičius failed to give the address of UNESCO as reported in *Tiesa,* it sounds like an accusation, not against the priest, but against those who do not leave us even the possibility of appealing for help, by hiding from people many international organizations for the fostering and defense of human rights and by setting up obstacles to contacting or appealing to them.

After reading the article, one is haunted by the conclusion: Every priest in Lithuania can be found guilty in this way. It remains unclear to the believer, as well as to the thinking unbeliever, why Father Sigitas Tamkevičius was sentenced. For collective teaching of children? For defending the Faith? But those are the duties of a priest. For drafting petitions? All citizens are guaranteed freedom of speech and of the press. For criticizing atheism? Persecution for criticism is forbidden by the law.

If the priest were really guilty, it would not be necessary to prepare so carefully for the trial: to conceal the date of the trial; to take such great care that people not leave work (switch working hours); to chase those who came to Vilnius away from the courthouse; to put them in jail — and the trial would undoubtedly be witnessed by the greatest number possible.

Reporter Mockuvienė, witnessing the trial for four days, could not find even one seriously convincing accusation. A high Party official said to one priest, "Why are you so angry at the reporters? They wrote the articles about Father Svarinskas and Father Tamkevičius in such a way that their innocence is obvious!" The article of Mrs. Mockuvienė, entitled, "The Rosary in One Hand, A Stick in the Other", the public understands as "The Rosary in One Hand, The Truth in the Other". In other words, the truth is the most terrifying weapon against Soviet atheism.

Long before the trial of Father Tamkevičius, shortly after his arrest, an expression circulated among the people, overheard from those who were preparing to dispose of the zealous priest, "We've caught a big bull, but we just can't find the chain to bind him." In other words, we have captured a great man, but we just can't come up with an accusation that will stick. Hence, it is no mystery why Father Tamkevičius was kept for seven whole months in the KGB dungeon. The very lightening speed with which the article appeared in the press (the day after the trial), tells us that everything had been decided in advance, and rehearsed, and the trial itself was a peculiar farce.

Almost two thousand years ago, in the name of the law, Christ was condemned to death: "We have a law, and according to it, He must die" . . . In his day Hitler killed Jews in the name of the law, and Stalin sentenced millions of innocent people to Siberia . . . In our day, also in the name of the law, the Supreme Court in Vilnius sentenced two of the most zealous priests in Lithuania, Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevičius.

History has condemned the crimes of the past. There is no doubt that history in the future will similarly judge current events; and if history sometimes errs, God does not err!

SUCH IS SOVIET FREEDOM OF RELIGION!

With the sentencing of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas and the arrest of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, the faithful of Lithuania began collecting signatures to petitions and protests addressed to Yuri Andropov, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist party, and to the Prosecutor General, demanding the release of the unjustly arrested priests. In order that the expressions of protest with their signatures would reach the addressees, and not be held up back in Lithuania at KGB headquarters, the faithful would take them in sections to Moscow, and leave them registered at the reception desk.

The expressions of protest in behalf of freedom for the priests were signed by one hundred twenty-three thousand (123,000) of the faithful, of whom twenty-two signed in blood. More of the faithful would have signed, if the atheists had not taken repressive measures just to disrupt the collecting of signatures. The atheists of Lithuania tried with threats to tell even priests to forbid the faithful to sign texts of the declaration. KGB agents, using physical

Father Alfonsas Svarinskas

force, hunted down people gathering signatures, stuffed them into vehicles, and took them to militia stations. There they intimidated and threatened them, confiscated texts and signatures, and dealt out 50-ruble fines.

The public was warned in Lithuanian television programs that those collecting signatures could be sentenced to prison. In more than one *rayon*, KGB agents interrogated individuals who had signed the petitions, and pressured them to sign vague texts presented by them.

With the expressions of protest which were taken to Moscow were declarations to the Prosecutor General and to the the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, which were signed in the name of the faithful of Lithuania by Aldona Šukytė, Albina Žemaitytė, Alfonsas Bumbulis and Juozas Kazalupskas.

To: The Prosecutor General of the USSR
From: The Catholic Faithful of Lithuania

A Petition

Prosecutor General, we Catholic Faithful of Lithuania come to you with a request that you review the cases of our priests, Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevičius, and release them, because they were unjustly dealt with by the Supreme Court of the Lithuanian SSR in May, 1983, under Par. 68 of the Criminal Code: Alfonsas Svarinskas was sentenced to seven years of imprisonment and three years of exile, and Sigitas Tamkevičius was arrested in the courtroom, also under Par. 68.

1. We have often heard their sermons, and we can honestly testify that they never carried on any anti-Soviet propaganda, but just explained religious truth, defended the rights of the faithful, and sometimes, criticized the atheists' attacks on religion and believers, all of which is allowed under Par. 49 and Par. 52 of the Soviet Constitution.

2. The atheists in Lithuania quite mistakenly and unjustly conduct propaganda against religion, the Church and the faithful, and force believers to accept atheism. Following is a whole list of real-life examples:

a. Newspapers, magazines and pamphlets, often libelously attack religion, the Church and priests. Please read their articles against religion, and you will see what we mean.

Even irrational creatures defend themselves; surely the clergy and faithful have the right to defend themselves. Priests are supposed to defend the faithful, but how can they do so? For forty years now, we have no religious newspaper. The only possibility for self-defense consists of sermons in church. But this displeases the atheists greatly, because the priests demonstrate their untruthful and libelous attacks and calumnies.

b. In school, the atheists often force the children of the faithful, against the wishes of their parents, to join atheistic organizations, forbid them to go to church, and punish those who refuse to join. All children who are religious believers are obliged to attend atheistic meetings. Surely the priests and faithful do not have to keep silent about this, when Par. 50 of the Soviet Constitution guarantees freedom of conscience and religion.

c. For forty years now, the faithful of Lithuania have no religious publications: no books, no newspapers and no prayerbooks. It is true that in those forty years, some books have been published in small numbers, but these are only for the priests; there are so few prayerbooks that there was only one copy for each ten thousand of the faithful. Even beggars in the old days used to get more support from the people than the faithful receive religious publications from the government atheists. In other democratic countries, such as Poland, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary and others, it is a completely different world: There the children are taught religion in church, the faithful have religious newspapers and books. We envy the Negroes of Africa their religious freedom.

Prosecutor, you understand well that our people who are religious believers cannot and will not remain silent in such a situation, even though more priests go to prison.

d. While in other Communist countries, the faithful freely carry out religious processions to the cemetery and to other churches, in our country, people are taken to court for that, even though such processions have been going on in our land for six hundred years, and Par. 50 of the Constitution permits them.

e. White-collar workers and teachers do not have the right to go to church freely. The faithful have neither radio nor television programs. Everything is devoted exclusively to the atheists.

f. Moreover, the frequent attacks of the atheists are completely incompatible with the Constitution. In this way, not only the Party is demeaned, but the entire Communist system: The atheists prevent young men from enrolling in the seminary, they forbid the preparation of children for First Confession and Communion; they forbid serving Mass, and they interfere in the assignment of priests and bishops.

3. Soviet newspapers often criticize the bad conduct of blue collar and white collar workers, and their negligence. Even fraternal trials sternly admonish those who disrupt good order.

Father Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevičius also objected to the transgression against the Constitution and human rights guaranteed by international agreements. We should have been glad that people turned up who were concerned that good order be maintained, who criticized the unjust activity of the atheists with regard to believers (this is useful for the Party and the government), but for this, they were sternly punished. Is this intelligent, or just? This is how Stalin acted. For that, he was condemned by the Party and the entire world. Why repeat the same mistakes?

4. All of us, almost our entire public, also condemn the attacks of the atheists, like the aforesaid priests. Hence, we should also be arrested and thrown into prison. That will not help matters. Stalin tried to crush people's belief in God by force, but people cannot live without their rights, no more than without bread.

5. It is no wonder that the believing public was deeply disturbed by the trial of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas, and sympathized with him as though it were on trial itself. The militia chased people away from the courthouse by force, drove them forty kilometers into the woods, shut them up for ten days or fined them 50 rubles. In this way they aroused the people's ire all the more. Has the situation improved since the arrest of Father Svarinskas?

6. The believing public also supports the Soviet state: It works in the offices, factories and fields . . . often better and more conscientiously than the atheists. We, the same working people, ask you to review the cases of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas and Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, and to release them.

NOTE: On your advice, we appealed to the Prosecutor of the Republic, but he responded only verbally: "Svarinskas is a criminal and will not be released, and the case of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius will not be set aside. Therefore, we appeal to you and trust that you will review the cases and release the aforesaid priests, and in order that they would not have to be tried in the future, we ask you to see that the unjust attacks of the atheists not be repeated.

July 16, 1983

To: The Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet,
USSR
From: Believers of Lithuania

A Petition

Honorable Chairman, we turn to you on some vitally important questions in the belief that you will decide them intelligently.

According to Par. 52 of the Soviet Constitution, we have freedom of religion and of conscience, but in Lithuania, this paragraph is regularly breached.

1. For forty years now, we have had NO RELIGIOUS NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE; some religious books were received by the priests only; only one out of ten thousand faithful received a prayerbook. We envy our ancestors who lived in czarist times, and the Negroes of Africa, who have enough religious literature. In other democratic countries, the picture is quite different. We are the only ones cheated.

2. Schoolteachers force pupils who are religious believers to join atheistic organizations. Often they sign up the entire class by force; anyone objecting is permanently punished and persecuted; all are forbidden to go to church. Teachers who are religious believers do not have the right to go to church; for that they are discharged from work. This is how other white-collar workers are treated also.

3. The faithful have NO RADIO OR TELEVISION PROGRAMS.

4. The atheistic government INTERFERES IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE SEMINARY — by obstructing the enrollment of all candidates who wish to try for the priesthood. They impose their will on the appointment of bishops and priests. Why are we so humiliated as not to have any of the rights conferred by the Constitution of the land? One clear example: Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius has been exiled for more than twenty years from Vilnius, for conscientiously doing his duty.

5. While the faithful in other democratic countries freely hold RELIGIOUS PROCESSIONS to cemeteries and other churches, in our country that is subject to penalty, even though the Soviet Constitution in Par. 50 allows it. Why so? For six hundred years in our country, such processions have been taking place.

6. Why must we PAY SIX TIMES MORE THAN OTHERS FOR ELECTRICITY? It is said that THE CHURCHES ARE

GIVEN TO US WITHOUT CHARGE, BUT IN REALITY, WE HAVE TO PAY HUGE SUMS, even though we ourselves built them. Where will you find another such state?

7. They have unjustly SEIZED THE CHURCH OF KLAIPĖDA, built by our own hands and money, and to this day, they have not returned it, but only keep promising to erect another. Where is the justice in this?

8. The atheistic administration in many places, AT THE INTERMENT OF A BELIEVER, FORBIDS HIM TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY A CROSS AND MOURNING BANNERS, as our ritual requires. Also, they DO NOT ALLOW ERECTION OF A CROSS ON THE GRAVES OF BELIEVERS, OR BEFORE ONE'S OWN HOME, as has been the custom among us from of old, so even the deceased do not have religious freedom.

9. In new cities like Akmenė, Elektrėnai and Sniečkus, HOUSES OF PRAYER MAY NOT BE OPENED, even though most of the residents desire it.

10. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian SSR, on July 28, 1976, decreed: "Religious associations have the right to obtain MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION", but in practice, the faithful are not allowed even to rent a bus or to buy an old one.

11. According to Leninist principle, the phrase "the Church is separated from the school" means that religion may not be taught. But in our country, the atheists FORBID THE TEACHING OF RELIGION TO CHILDREN, EVEN IN CHURCH. In democratic countries, that is done freely.

12. The atheistic leadership FORCES THE FAITHFUL TO work on Sundays and holy days, even though they are the majority. In Poland, Catholics can freely celebrate, and they get the work done anyhow.

13. The results of atheistic oppression clearly manifested themselves in the arrest of Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevičius, who tried to defend the rights of believers.

These and other painful facts seriously oppress and annoy the entire believing public; we can no more do without freedom of religion, than we can without bread. We ask you to do away with such anti-Constitutional oppression by the atheists.

July 25, 1983

Lietuva, Kaunas
Mažoji g-vė 1-10
Juozas Kazalupskas

To: Yuri Andropov, General Secretary of the Central
Committee of the Communist Party, USSR

Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR

From: Believers of Lithuania:

Aldona Šukytė
Albina Žemaitytė
Alfonsas Bumbulis
Juozas Kazalupskas

A Petition

In May, 1983, we came to Moscow to see the Prosecutor General with the request to review the cases of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas and Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, and to release them as unjustly sentenced. We were received by Prosecutor Utkin, who told us that first, it was necessary to appeal to the Prosecutor of the Lithuanian SSR, and with his reply in writing, return to see him.

On June 24, 1983, we went to the Office of the Prosecutor of the LSSR with a petition from the faithful of Lithuania, regarding the release of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas and Father Sigitas Tamkevičius. We were received by his assistant, Prosecutor Bakučionis, who promised us that he would give us an answer within a month. We received only a verbal response, that Father Alfonsas Svarinskas was a criminal and would not be released. The case against Father Sigitas Tamkevičius would not be set aside.

On August 25, 1983, at 9:20 AM, we arrived at Moscow with the purpose of going to the offices of the highest levels of government in the Soviet Union, asking them to release as unjustly sentenced, Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevičius.

We came armed with the following documents:

1. The petition by the faithful of Lithuania to the Prosecutor General of the USSR, in which was indicated a general total of 123,000, twenty-two of them having signed in blood. The people of Lithuania who are religious believers testified that Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevičius have been unjustly sentenced and request you to release them like all innocent people.
2. Eight bundles of signatures, with texts on behalf of the release of the aforesaid priests.

3. The petition by the faithful of Lithuania to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR regarding the persecution of the faithful in Lithuania, requesting rights and freedoms for them.

4. A bundle of texts and signatures (more than five thousand), addressed to Secretary General Y. Andropov of the Central Committee, USSR, requesting the release of Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevičius.

5. Two letters with petitions to the Commissioner for Religious Affairs of the USSR.

When we arrived at the station in Moscow, a group of militia officers and persons in civilian dress approached us. The officials took our things, and using force, hauled us off to the militia station. They searched our personal belongings, and demanded our passports. Then we demanded to see their personal papers and the Prosecutor's order. At first, the officials would not show us their documents, but threatened us. Later, Ruslov and Tichonov presented their documents, but the others and two from Lithuania did not present their documents and did not show us any order from the prosecutor.

Officer Tichonov made a written record of our passports and listed confiscated documents. Ruslov, in consultation with the other officials, returned and demanded that we sign acknowledgement of the illegal decision, that we had no rights to visit Moscow, and the region of Moscow. If we would sign, they promised to let us go home scott-free; otherwise, they would push us out of Moscow by force of arms. We refused to sign. They then demanded our passports again. It became obvious to us that they would not return the documentation (the petitions with signatures and texts), and that they would not allow us to see the organs of the highest government of the USSR.

We kept quiet, and did not react to the unjust demands of militia functionaries. The officials took away our passports by force, they drew up a summons, saying that we had interfered with travellers and porters. They called over two porters who signed the complaint, even though we did not interfere with anyone, and no one objected. . .

The militia officials demanded in a threatening manner that we sign the abovementioned unjust judgement, they ridiculed us, and acted rudely. The captain of the militia, who did not give his name, threatened to beat us up. Then the officials dragged us before the commandant of the militia department, Colonel Alexei Filimonov.

With him were many militia officials and persons in civilian dress. He demanded that we sign the unjust decision denying us the right to visit Moscow or its environs, and threatened to put us in jail, to turn us over to special services, called us fanatics, and accused us of some sort of agitation. After all this, Colonel Alexei Filimonov approached each one of us personally, and threatening us, required that we sign the abovementioned illegal document.

We insisted that he return the documents confiscated from us, and allow us to appeal to the highest government organs of the USSR. Instead of consenting to our request, on orders from Colonel Filimonov, and with Militia Major Chumiak in charge, they kept us eleven hours in the Militia Station. A group of militia officers and civilians hauled us at 9:00 PM from the Militia Station to the Moscow-Kaliningrad train, and forced us into a railroad car.

As far as Kaunas, we were accompanied by two armed militia officers. About 3:00 PM, August 26, we were put out of the car in Kaunas. On the platform was an unusual number of militia officers, and with them, civilians. They returned our passports.

On September 7, 1983, we appealed to the Prosecutor General of the USR over the unjustified detention. August 25 of this year, in Moscow, Prosecutor V.B. Golov, directed us to go to the Moscow Transport Procurator's office with this problem. We went to the address indicated. The Chief Prosecutor (of the Moscow Transport Prosecutor's Office) Trusov, said that he already knew about this incident and was not able to help us. Militia officials were acting on orders from the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

On September 15, 1983, we returned to the Prosecutor General's Office in Moscow with the following documents:

1. A petition from the faithful of Lithuania, which indicated that 123,000 of the faithful have signed, twenty-two of them in blood, declaring that Father Alfonsas Svarinskas and Father Sigitas Tamkevičius had been unjustly sentenced and asking that their cases be reviewed and they be released as completely innocent.
2. The statement of the faithful of Lithuania about the persecution of believers in Lithuania, requesting rights and freedoms due religious believers of Lithuania in accordance with the Constitution of the USSR.
3. A petition concerning the unjust arrest in Moscow, August 25, 1983.

We were received by Prosecutor V.B. Golov, who said in a loud voice dripping with hatred, "Father Svarinskas is an enemy;

you and all believers are enemies of the Soviet government."

On September 16, 1983, we appealed to the editors of Pravda in Moscow, with the following petitions:

1. Concerning our unjust arrest, August 25, 1983.
2. Concerning the conduct of V.B. Golov, September 15,
3. The Editors refused to publish these items.

November 20, 1983

Replied may be addressed to:
Lietuvos TSR Kaunas — 16
Mažoji 1-10
J. Kazalupskas

The more active faithful of the parish of Kybartai, trying to defend their arrested pastor, Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, are being terrorized and threatened by government officials, and called extremists. These activities accelerated particularly after the parish committee wrote government representatives a petition, and when in August, a group of members of the Kybartai Parish Committee went to see Commissioner for Religious Affairs Peter Anilionis, with a request to release their pastor Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, or at least not to act as cruelly as during the trial of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas, when they did not admit a single believer, and out on the street, seized relatives, friends and acquaintances of Father Svarinskas who had come for the trial, drove them off into the woods and gave them jail sentences and fines.

Anilionis would not engage in serious discussion, and did not deign to hear out the requests of the faithful. He shouted at those who had come, blaming them for not electing a new chairman for the parish committee (the president of the parish committee is S. Tamkevičius). Ending the discussion, he stated that even if he wanted to very much, he could not help them, since everything is under the control of the KGB. The people of Kybartai asked how to get to the offices of the KGB. Anilionis replied that he really did not know.

On September 1, Director Baltutis of the Store Furnishings Factory, on government orders, lectured Miss Birutė Siaurusaitytė, a member of the parish committee. After checking to see whether she had really signed the committee's petition, he affirmed that believers are allowed to pray for their pastor, but there is no need to go about government agencies looking for the truth, because for such activity, they could be penalized.

That same day, another worker in the same agency, Mrs. Ona Griškaitienė, was summoned to see the Factory Director. The Director called her an extremist, just like Father Tamkevičius, and said that criminal proceedings had already been instituted against her, that she was raising her children badly (they go to church), that she was embarrassing the factory since she goes to church and even defends priests.

September 1, Director Baltutis of the Store Furnishings factory warned yet another member of the committee, Alfonsas Bielicka, who had signed the petition defending Father Tamkevičius.

On September 2, Mrs. Nastutė Mačulaitienė, treasurer of the parish committee, was summoned to see the Vice Chairman of the *Rayon* Executive Committee, Juozas Urbonas. Vice Chairman Urbonas officially warned her that no one else should sign the petitions since they were liable to punishment. He did not give Mrs. Mačulaitienė any written warning. The Vice Chairman explained that she must understand that Father Tamkevičius is a criminal. Mrs. Mačulaitienė replied that she, better than he, knew Father Sigitas Tamkevičius because as a member of the parish committee she had occasion to meet him, and could describe him as a zealous and good priest. As long as the court had not promulgated its decision, they had the full right of seeking justice, of petitioning and demanding his release.

Because they went to the Commissioner for Religious Affairs Anilionis seeking justice, the Chief of the Vilkaviškis Roads Commission, Kybartai Division, publicly reprimanded at work parish committee member Tutlis, saying that for such activities, he could be made criminally liable.

RAIDS AND INTEROGATIONS

Kriokialaukis (Rayon of Alytus)

On July 13 and 15, 1983, the Pastor of Kriokialaukis, a member of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights, Father Vaclovas Stakėnas, was interrogated at the Vilnius KGB. Interrogator Pilelis was interested in such questions as: "When did you become acquainted with Father Sigitas Tamkevičius? How many of his sermons have you heard and on what occasions? What sort of problems did Father Sigitas Tamkevičius touch on in his sermons? For what purpose did you join the Committee? Do you still consider the Committee active? Why do you refuse to write a statement saying that you will not participate in Commitee activity?"

When Father Stakėnas refused to resign in writing from the Committee, after a few hours, the interrogator tried to show that the Committee's activity is anti-state and he tried to say that the purpose of the Committee was to serve the Vatican, Radio Liberty and other foreign radio stations.

Pilelis ended the interrogation with the threat, "If you continue this meaningless struggle, we'll see who wins!"

On September 19, 1983, Father Vaclovas Stakenas was again summoned to the Vilnius KGB. The priest did not go for the interrogation until the 21st, and for this, he was reprimanded. This time, Interrogator Liniauskas was very interested to know if during the Christmas holidays, the subject had not participated in a Christmas party for the children in Kybartai. The interrogator saw in this holiday a "terrible" detail, for which Father Sigitas Tamkevičius could be seriously accused. It seems that while the candy was being distributed, a woman in the gathering asked, "Santa, did you bring us ladies a voucher for a comforter, or a towel?" All this, the interrogator considered as the "activists' " grist to the imperialists' mill, and finally said, "We won't stand for it!"

After the interrogation, Father Stakėnas was lectured for three additional hours.

During the trial of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, the KGB planned to summon all members of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights.

On December 9, the Pastor of Josvainiai, Father Leonas Kalinauskas, was called in for interrogation.

On December 20, the Pastor of Skaudvilė, Father Vincas Vėlavičius, was presented with a summons to see Prosecutor Bakučionis in Vilnius. Since Father Vėlavičius' health is quite frail, he refused to go.

On December 20, Father Jonas Kauneckas received a summons to see Commissioner for Religious Affairs Petras Anilionis. The Commissioner treated the priest very cordially, avoiding any sensitive topics.

Kybartai

On September 12, 1983, Miss Ona Šarakauskaitė, worker at the parish church of Kybartai, was ordered to see Interrogator Vidmantas Baumila. During questioning, she was presented with the usual questions regarding the case of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius: "What can you tell us about the person of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius? Did he not libel the Soviet system in his sermons? Who organized the children's Christmas party and distributed gifts? Did the children recite verses in return? What do you know about the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*?, etc.

In the course of the interrogation, an attempt was made to determine whether during August, 1981, Miss Šarakauskaitė and her companion, Bernadeta Mališkaitė, together with a group of young people, vacationed at Šlavantai Lake; whether they were detained by militia officers and taken under custody to the militia station in Lazdijai, and whether the aforesaid incident was correctly described in a petition regarding discrimination agains youth who are religious believers. Both of them confirmed that the incident was described in the petition accurately. Interrogator Baumila was interested in finding out what Miss Šarakauskaitė knew about the late Father Virgilijus Jaugelis, who is interred in the church tower of Kybartai.

The interrogation lasted six hours.

On September 11, during interrogation, Baumila asked the same of Bernadeta Maliskaitė.

Kybartai

On September 15, 1983, the Kybartai Church charwoman, Miss Ona Kavaliauskaitė, was summoned to see Interrogator V. Baumila at the Vilnius KGB. Under interrogation, she was repeatedly asked about articles seized in a raid April 17, 1980. Miss Kavaliauskaitė refused to answer questions regarding the raid, or articles taken in the course of it, arguing that she had already been interrogated on these questions, the interrogation record is in the KGB safe, and she had no additional information.

KGB agent Baumila tried to show that Miss Kavaliauskaitė had taken things which were not hers; that all these articles belonged to Father Sigitas Tamkevičius. Miss Kavaliauskaitė declared that now, as earlier, she could affirm that all the articles found in her room during the raid belonged to her.

During the interrogation, Miss Kavaliauskaitė was presented with five notebooks full of copies of letters written by Nijolė Sadūnaitė from camp and from exile. The interrogator wanted to know whether Miss Kavaliauskaitė had not read them. She explained that she was seeing these notebooks for the first time. Miss Kavaliauskaitė was further asked whether she knew Nijolė Sadūnaitė and her brother, Jonas Sadūnas. The interrogation lasted seven hours.

Kaunas

At about 8:00 PM on August 29, 1983, a group of militia and civilians burst into an apartment at Jaunosios Gvardijos g. Nr. 1, Bt. 3. Here they found more than thirty of the faithful gathered in prayer. Among them was the Pastor of Skaisgiris, Father Leonardas Jagminas, who had come to visit Miss Zofija Kilaitė, who was ill. The officials introduced themselves as being from the executive committee, the education department and the militia. Asked what they were gathered for, the believers explained that they had come together to pray for a lately deceased resident of the apartment, Miss Veronika Paukštytė.

The newcomers demanded the papers of those in the group. Most of them were pensioners, and mothers of families, who never carry their papers around with them. After lengthy questioning, they took down the names of all participants, and warned them not to gather anymore. Asked about the anniversary of the deceased, the officials hesitated, saying that probably no permission would be given to arrange a memorial service in that apartment.

The next day, the officials returned to check the documents of the apartment's owners.

After that came the interrogations: Summoned were Miss Zita Kinčiūtė, Mis Zita Kupčiūnaitė and others. Father Jagminas was summoned to the *rayon* to explain himself.

Raseiniai.

On September 16, 1983, Mrs. Genovaitė Butkuvienė was interrogated at Raseiniai KGB Headquarters. A KGB agent who would not give his name first assailed the subject for coming to KGB Headquarters wearing a little cross. Some time later, a chekist ordered Mrs. Butkuvienė to write an explanation telling why she had been in Kaunas the evening of August 29, 1983, where a little group of people had gathered to pray. He demanded that she tell whom of those present she was acquainted with, and whom she had ridden with. They said they had information that there were two "such miscreants" from Raseiniai. Mrs. Butkuvienė was also accused of participating in processions at the church in Viduklė.

Viduklė

On September 16, 1983, Mrs. M. Šaukienė, a resident of Viduklė, was summoned to the KGB in Raseiniai. The chekist was interested in knowing what kind of meeting took place August 29 in Kaunas, in which she had participated. She said that was her personal affair, and asked him to mind his own business, and not to shame himself. When Mrs. Šaukienė stated that she would not answer the questions posed to her, the KGB agent summoned Chief Gardauskas. Chekist Gardauskas ridiculed and calumniated the Pastor of Viduklė, Father Alfonsas Svarinskas and accused Mrs. Šaukienė of "zealously running around" in behalf of the arrested priest. A third chekist, who showed up at the interrogation stated, "In 1947, we hung people like that, and we'll hang you, too!" He spoke like this repeatedly, threatening arrest, imprisonment and exile to Siberia.

Kybartai

On October 11, 1983, the Associate Pastor of the parish of Kybartai, Father Jonas Matulionis, was again summoned to the Vilnius KGB for interrogation. (He had been summoned on September 8, but had not gone.) Interrogator Liniauskas was interested in information touching on the case of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius: Since when had Father Matulionis known him? What had Father Tamkevičius spoken about during his sermons? He asked about the petition regarding discrimination against young people, written in 1982, for Christmas party in Kybartai, activities of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights, etc.

In the course of the interrogation, KGB agent Liniauskas showed Father Matulionis the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*, No. 52, asking how Father Matulionis' petition written to Petras Griškevičius, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania had gotten in, and he accused the subject of insulting Soviet officials in lthe petition, specifically, Juozas Urbonas, Vice Chairman of the Vilkaviškis *Rayon* Executive Committee, calling him an imposter.

Father Matulionis explained that this is not in the petition; on

Father Jonas-Kastytis Matulionis, a graduate of the underground seminary and Associate Pastor of the parish in Kybartai, Lithuania, stands by the confessional of Father Tamkevičius in the parish church.

the contrary, it was Executive Committee Vice Chairman Urbonas who, as soon as Father Matulionis came to work in Kybartai, began calling him an imposter: a false priest without orders. Father Matulionis reminded Interrogator Liniauskas that the KGB agents in Vilnius, interrogating an acquaintance of his in August, had asked about him, and losing their temper, vilified him, calling him an anti-Soviet bastard.

When Father Matulionis refused to sign the interrogation report, the interrogator, angered stated that people who refused to sign were sitting in the KGB cellars. When he was asked whether it would be possible to see Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, Interrogator Liniauskas replied, "You'll see him in camp!"

the interrogator, angered, stated that people who refused to sign were sitting in the KGB cellar. When he was asked whether it would be possible to see Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, Interrogator Liniauskas replied, "You'll see him in camp!"

The interrogation lasted four hours.

Vilnius

On September 20, 1983, Jonas Sadūnas wrote petitions to the Prosector of the Lithuanian SSR and to the Chief Judge of the LSSR Supreme Court. In them, he described his interrogation which had taken place at the offices of the Vilnius KGB. Interrogator Senior Lieutenant Vidmantas Baumila grilled Jonas Sadūnas as a witness in the case of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius. Sadūnas received no response to the petitions, however, the KGB agents immediately reacted. On October 17, Jonas Sadūnas was signed out of the hospital in Jonava.

On October 20, while Jonas Sadūnas was working at a construction site, a clandestine search was made of Room 24 of the Jonava Special Command Center, where Sadūnas lived. After the search, Jonas Sadūnas was missing copies of the petitions written September 20, 1983, to the Prosecutor of the LSSR, and to the Supreme Court of the LSSR; addresses of friends abroad; a radio receiver and his passport.

Garliava (Rayon of Kaunas)

On November 28, 1983, on a street in Kaunas, the militia stopped Miss Aldona Raižytė, took her to the Militia Department, and from there they took her home, saying that they were going to carry out a search of her apartment.

Since there are three apartments in the building, the searchers brought three search orders, in which it was noted that they would be looking for some leather jackets missing from the store in Garliava. The search was carried out by about ten people. Although the searchers represented themselves as being from the militia, the KGB also took an active part in the search, among them, Matulevičius. The strange thing was that they carefully booked for the leather jackets in notebooks, in the smallest boxes, in books and behind picture frames.

At the time of the search, they discovered in the house Miss Gemma-Jadvyga Stanelytė, Miss Elena Šuliauskaitė and Miss Julija Kuodytė. the KGB agents searched their handbags, and also carried out a body search of A. Teresius, who happened by, all but stripping him. In spite of the fact that the owners of two of the apartments, Vincas Biekša and Mrs. Petronė Nausėdienė were not at home, the KGB agents searched their apartments, also.

Siezed during the search were: a typewriter, Aleksandr Solshenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago, Lietuvos ateitis (Lithuania's Future)* Nos. 2 and 5, many notebooks and various printed matter.

After the search, summonses for interrogation on November 29 were written, not only to the residents of the building: Mrs. Alma Mikličienė and Miss Aldona Raižytė, but also to Miss Julija Kuodytė, Gemma-Jadvyga Stanelytė, Miss Elena Šuliauskaitė and A. Teresius.

The next day, with the trial of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius already in progress in Vilnius, those summoned were kept for a long time at militia headquarters, without calling them for interrogation. Some of them had their passes taken away so that they would not escape. Regardless of that, however, Aldona Raižytė and Teresius, after waiting in vain for half a day to be interrogated, left the militia offices and drove off toward Vilnius in a private automobile. At Vievsiai, they were stopped by militia, who took over the wheel of their car and returned them to the Miliati Department in Kaunas.

After interrogation, they were presented with summonses to report to agent Matulevičius at the KGB on November 30 for interrogation, to prevent them from leaving for the trial in Vilnius.

Kaunas

Simultaneously, Vytautas Vaičiūnas, who had just returned from labor camp, was being interrogated at KGB Headquarters. The chekist assailed him especially for being in Viduklė November 7, and participating in a reception for him at the apartment of Miss Monika Gavėnaitė. The chekist raged especially because the people of Viduklė had profaned the November 7 holiday by organizing services for Father Alfonsas Svarinskas, and arranging the reception for the returned prisoner.

Kaunas

Just before the trial of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius, former prisoner Mrs. Elena Kryževičienė, a pensioner, was summoned to KGB headquarters for interrogation. The KGB tried to frighten her so that she would have no desire to go to Vilnius where the priest's trial was to take place.

OUR PRISONERS

At the present time, the KGB is holding up en masse, letters addressed to prisoners and to exiles.

Letters from the camps are also received infrequently; Only a few letters have been received from Father Svarinskas.

Julius Sasnauskas and others in exile are not receiving letters. Their letters to Lithuania are also not reaching the addressees.

KGB agents once mentioned to a young woman under interrogation that letters to the camps supposedly interfere with the rehabilitation of the prisoners.

Following is an excerpt from a letter of Viktoras Petkus, which has reached us:

"It is true that man has harnessed nature, conquered the planet and opened a window to space, but has this made him happier? Man himself has evoked forces which he cannot control. Hence, have those proponents of progress not made a great detour? Have they not degraded true spiritual values? They have not realized where the basic wisdom of mankind is concentrated, they have not plumbed the depths, but merely given themselves over to technology.

"The result: In technology, great strides have been made, but what about mankind? After all, one man differs from another, first of all, in his scale of values, ambitions and ideals, and not in how he manipulates this or that technology.

"Could the rationalist believe that the stormy Twentieth Century would break upon us, bringing with it not only flights of the scientific mind, with fantastic progress in technology transposing from the mundane to the eternal dimension the tragedy of the human condition, the paradox of life and death would become more and more manifest?

"Looking from the viewpoint of eternity at our earthly concerns, joys and sorrows, we encounter layer upon layer of all sorts of nonsense, and it turns out that all of the things which we

Julius Sasnauskas, in exile in Parabel, Tomsk. He suffers from inflammation of the bone and cartilage, and curvature of the spine.

thought were so terribly important, for which the living at all times are so concerned and struggle so much, pale in the face of eternity, and all that is left is the constant succession of generations recalling the monotony of the sea, an eternal cycle.

"Does this give us the right to downgrade human life? Not at all. For the value of a human being is immeasurable. Nor can we in any way be ambivalent about our homeland or the fate of mankind. Hence the question arises: What awaits us? How must we live in this alternative situation? Where should we look for essential values?

"More and more often I think to myself: Of which are there more in the world — fools or flunkies? And how deeply are the roots of absurdity embedded in people? What is a human being's potential for becoming oneself? Where has bold and logical human behavior gone? Surely man is able to overcome his limits! Man, more and more often becomes a flunky, forgetting such things as duty, devotion to others and struggle against oppression and injustice.

"He tries not to notice the drama of life, to turn away from problems. He is more attracted by the banality of everyday life, by vague depersonalized uncreative activity. What is it — lack of willpower; ignorance; inability to distinguish truth from lies, not knowing how to distinguish one's self from others?"

1983

PRIESTS IN DEFENSE OF BELIEVERS' RIGHTS

To: The General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union
Copy to: The First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania
From: The Priests of the Lithuanian SSR

A Petition

Thirty years ago, or earlier, during the era of personality cult, some leading personages in the Soviet Union thought that Communism could not be brought about without force or fear. The XX Plenary Session of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union put an end to those shameful tactics. Many camps were emptied and closed. Exiles returned home, sundered families were reunited and cultural and economic life did not suffer at all as a result, but on the contrary, improved.

It is most unfortunate that not all the anomilies of the era of the personality cult were done away with. Some of them survive to this day. One of those anomalies is the restriction of the freedom of conscience and religion, the demeaning of religion, and atheization by force. That all this is truly an anomaly is clearly demonstrated from life. In Europe today, there is a whole array of socialist states, in which those anomalies are almost unknown; where believers are not discriminated against either in school or at work, where a voluminous religious press is published and where cultural and economic life nevertheless advances no more slowly than among us.

Thus it is, for example, in the German Democratic Republic. There they have about as many Catholics as in Lithuania, and the Sankt Beno Publishing House in twenty years has published more than 2000 (two thousand!) titles, for an average of two books a week. Meantime in Lithuania, as reported in the *Valstiečių laikraštis (Peasants' Newspaper)*, 1983, Nr. 56, in the past twenty-eight years, permission has been given to publish barely twenty three publications, and the greater part of those was published in a very small quantity, just for the priests.

There, religious instruction is not forbidden in church or in buildings adjoining the church; there, in the schools, no one ridicules children on account of their religious convictions, forces them to write anti-religious compositions, or to recite anti-religious propaganda or to speak against their own convictions. There, convents and monasteries exist, and the number of seminarians is not limited by the government. There, religious pilgrimmages are not forbidden. And this is the Germany which was crushed the worst during the last war; economically it holds one of the highest places among socialist countries today. Religious freedom has not hurt it nor interfered with its economic or cultural development.

From the human and legal point of view, neither discrimination against the faithful or repression of religion can be justified in any way. Atheization by force has not justified itself: When the atheists say the influence of religion on the people is constantly decreasing and the facts of life demonstrate how drunkenness is constantly spreading, the breakup of families is increasing, moral corruption in public life is growing and believers are turned against the atheists themselves.

The Constitution of the Soviet Union guarantees freedom of conscience and religion for all: Everyone has the right to profess any religion, or to be an atheist. Hence atheists do not have the right to force others to be atheists by coercion or threats. They do not have the right to take advantage of believers, to deny them the most elementary right to profess and practice religion, to teach and educate their children according to their own religious convictions and to obtain literature necessary for that. The government, mindful of its commitments resulting from international declarations, MUST HELP PARENTS to enjoy their rights, and not interfere with them.

Meantime, in our country the school forces children to become atheists, contradicting the wishes of parents who practice their religion, and decreasing their authority. We would all consider it abnormal if the children of atheists were signed up for some sort of religious organization, without the knowledge or consent of the parents. The greatest furor would arise! But in our country, that is just how the teachers act with the believing children of believing parents, signing them up by force in the Little Octobrists and Pioneers. Similarly, school children and students who are religious believers are forced to join the Communist Youth League.

The Soviet press reports that Soviet law is the same for everyone. However, certain laws or instructions (some of them secret), are aimed especially against believers and with their help, the atheists want to run religious life. It would be interesting to know what the atheists would say if believers began by the same means to run the public and private life of the atheists.

The Soviet press affirms that Soviet government organs do not interfere in the internal affairs of the church. But in truth, it is precisely they who finally decide who may study at the seminary and work as a priest, they decide on the quota for seminarians, they do not allow bishops to act independently, and they interfere with papal appointments of suitable new bishops for the Church. It is against such abnormalities that clergy and faithful have raised their voice, as well as the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights, to which Father Alfonsas Svarinskas and Father Sigitas Tamkevičius belong. They demanded such freedom of thought, conscience and religion, as spoken of by the international declarations, signed by the Soviet Union and other states.

How much we read in the Soviet press about the abuse of position and about lack of conscientiousness among workers. This is standard and necessary criticism of evils. In this respect, the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights said nothing of morality and honesty, and in Church-state relations. However, this criticism the Soviet press called denigration and libel, and termed it a crime. We write this petition based exclusively on information provided by the press regarding the case of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas and with practical experience, since during the trial, not one fellow priest or interested believer was allowed into the courtroom.

Those wishing to get into the courtroom used to be kept back outside the courthouse, or even on Lenin Prospect, and driven as much as several score kilometers from Vilnius out into the woods, and there, forced to get out one-by-one. Some of them were given 50-ruble fines, others, ten days in jail. In one case, over a dozen priests were detained several hours at the militia department without any reason.

One conclusion suggests itself from all that: It is necessary not to imprison people for criticism, but to put into effect those international rights which the entire civilized world observes, and which the Soviet Union also agreed to observe. In accordance with the deepest convictions of priests and faithful, the sentencing of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas and the arrest of Father Sigitas Tamkevičius is a serious mistake. (This is confirmed by over 70000 signatures under the petition to you and to other agencies, saying that they are not guilty.), so we ask you to set aside the decision of the Supreme Court of the Lithuanian SSR, and to release both these priests without delay. Signed by the priests of the Archdiocese of Vilnius, Fathers:

1. Vaclovas Aliulis, 2. Antanas Andriuškevičius, 3. Julius Baltušis, 4. Danielius Baužys, 5. Romualdas Blažys, 6. Janas Charukevič, 7. Aldas Čeponis, 8. Vladas Černiauskas, 9. Petras Daunoras, 10. Antanas Dilys, 11. Antonis Dziekan, 12. Kazimieras Gailius, 13. Konstantinas Gajauskas, 14. Ignas Jakutis, 15. Pijus Jankus, 16 Bronius Jaura.

17. Stanislovas Kakarieka, 18. Aleksandras Kaškevičius, 19. Algis Kazlauskas, 20. Algimantas Keina, 21. Kazimieras Kindurys, 22. Tadeušas Kondrusevičius, 23. Jonas Kukta, 24. Jonas Lauriūnas, 25. Stasys Lidys, 26. Silvestras Malachovski, 27. Stasys Markevičius, 28. Alfonsas Merkys, 29. Konstantinas Molis.

30. Juzefas Obremski, 31. Nikodemas Pakalka, 32. Zenonas Patiejūnas, 33. Edmundas Paulionis, 34. Mykolas Petravičius, 35. Alfonsas Petronis, 36. Juozas Puidokas, 37, Stanislovas Puidokas, 28. Kazimieras Pukėnas, 39. Vytautas Pūkas, 40. Bronius Sakavičius, 41. Justinas Saulius, 42. Leonas Savickas, 43. Marijonas Savickas, 44. Antanas Simonaitis, 45. Martynas Stonys, 46. Jordanas Šlėnys.

47. Alfonsas Tamulaitis, 48. Česlovas Taraškevičius, 49. Petras Tarvydas, 50. Adolfas Trusevič, 51. Juozas Tūnaitis, 52. Steponas Tūnaitis, 53. Albertas Ulickas, 54. Jonas Vaitonis, 55. Domas Valančiauskas, 56. Kazimieras Valeikis, 57. Stanislovas Valiukėnas, 58. Donatas Valiukonis, 59. Kazimieras Vasiliauskas, 60. Vaclovas Verikas, 61. Antonis Zaman, 62. Kazimieras Žemėnas, 63. Leonidas Nestiukas, 64. Anton Pilipčik, 65. Mykolas Žemaitis, 66. Petras Purlys, 67. Kazys Meilus, 68. Jonas Boruta, 69. Kazimieras Žilys (Diocese of Kaišiadorys).

The following refused to sign:

1. Henrikas Blaževič, 2. Ričardas Černiauskas, 3. Vytautas Jeskelevičius, 4. Jonas Kardelis, 5. Napoleonas Norkūnas, 6. Juozas Norkūnas, 7. Ignas Baberžis, 8. Juozas Poškus, 9. Vytautas Rūkas, 10. Juozas Urbonas, 11. Kazimieras Vaičionis, 12. Vladislavas Velymanski, 13. Edmundas Kulvietis, 14. Jonas Grigaitis.

The others were not approached.

NEWS FROM THE DIOCESES

Vilnius

In the confidential *Information Bulletin*, Nr. 1, for this year (1983), Secretary Petras Griškevičius of the Communist Party of Lithuania speaks about practical problems in the struggle against "clerical extremism" and about Party organization tasks in educating the people of the republic in atheism.

The Party leader first gives a general overview of the Church in Lithuania. He rejoices over the fact that many of the clergy are loyal to the government. However, there are a number who are extremist in their attitudes, who try to draw other priests to their side, especially the young ones. The general tone for these ideological diversions is set by the Vatican.

The Party Secretary especially attacked Pope John Paul II for his constant sympathy for the Church in Lithuania. He mentioned that many priests come from abroad and try to bring unfriendly literature into Lithuania. They have even bought Father Alfonsas Svarinskas, Father Sigitas Tamkevičius and other priests small automobiles.

He did not spare angry words for the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights, either. They allegedly promote the writing of all sorts of petitions and disobedience to the Regulations for Religious Associations.

"The priests of the Diocese of Telšiai have declared that they cannot keep Soviet laws regarding cult, since these are contrary to the Gospel and to the spirit of Vatican Decrees. We have enough means to guarantee law and order! There would be no compromise or concessions here! We need only to unmask in time the organizers of collective letters."

The Party leader had much to say about religious festivals, processions to Šiluva, the Hill of Crosses and other shrines, and demanded that any new traditions be immediately abolished.

"You are not to make any compromise with the training of secret priests who have no permission to work, but get involved in 'pastoral activity'. They are to be considered vagrants!"

He urged the dissolving of diocesan priests' committees (Priests' Councils — Ed. Note), declaring them illegal.

"The monitoring of sermons must be stepped up, and measures must be taken against priests propagating anti-Communism. When priests who are warned do not come to a proper conclusion, sterner measures are to be taken. Their registration card must be taken from them.

"In every work collective, an atmosphere of hatred must be fostered toward extremist-oriented priests. OUR AIM MUST BE TO HAVE EVEN BELIEVERS BE SCANDALIZED BY THE SERMONS OF ANTI-SOVIET PRIESTS."

The lecturer further complained, "It is downright embarrassing to say that about three thousand children are involved in religious activities. This is a serious offense!" The Party leader gave instructions to fight the harder in an effort to attract children away from religious ceremonies.

Griškevičius gave much attention to the problem of convents and monasteries. In his opinion, there are in Lithuania 1.5 thousand religious women, who must be neutralized so that they would not have any influence on their social setting.

Vilnius

On November 5, 1983, the Commissioner for Religious Affairs, Petras Anilionis, presented Stanislovas Puidokas, associate pastor of the church in Naujoji Vilnija, a warning as follows:

"On Octover 30, 1983, the Vilnius Associate Pastor Father Stanislovas Puidokas held services at Aušros Vartai (Shrine of Our Lady of the Dawn Gate), delivered a non-religious sermon, disinformed believers and thus violated Par. 19 of the Regulations for Religious Associations: 'Activities of ministers of cult are restricted to the area where the members of the religious association reside, and by the location of the house of prayer.' He is therefore warned that in the future, for violations of the Regulations, he will be suitably punished." The warning was signed by Religious Affairs Commissioner Petras Anilionis.

Father Puidokas did not acknowledge the warning in writing, since Aušros Vartai is a national Lithuanian Shrine, everyone may offer Mass there, and the sermon is an integral part of the Mass. In the sermon, some thoughts concerning the trial of Father Alfonsas Svarinskas were quoted from an article in the newspaper *Tiesa* (May 7) entitled, "Nuteistas už įstatymų pažeidimus" ("Sentenced for breaking the law").

The Commissioner considers that a great crime.

Plateliai (Rayon of Plungė)

During the night of October 7, 1983, unknown culprits broke into the church in Plateliai and tore out the tabernacles from the two side altars. They tried also to tear out the tabernacle from the main altar, but were unable to, since it is sheathed in steel. The burglars took from the side altar an old, artistically gold-plated reliquary.

Švenčionėliai (Rayon of Švenčioniai)

On November 26, 1983, at 7:00 PM, in the church of Švenčionėliai, services were being held for the deceased of the parish, and for Father Bronius Laurinavičius (the second anniversary of his death). The *rayon* government requested in advance that there be no mention of the anniversary of Father Laurinavičius death. Priests and faithful came to the church in Švenčionėliai that day, unbidden. Holy Mass was concelebrated by the Pastor of Švenčioniai, Father Kazimieras Gailius, Father Kazimieras Žemėnas and Father Aldas Čeponis. The sermon was delivered by Father Jonas Lauriūnas.

Immediately after the services, the pastor, Father Gailius, was summoned to the *rayon* offices. Here, they accused him of not carrying out the "contract". They accused him of inviting the priests, asked him where the girls in folk costume came from, and why he allowed

Father Jonas Boruta, who had completed the seminary illegally, to celebrate Mass. (Father Boruta offered Mass after all the services, when the faithful had almost finished dispersing.)

Garliava (Rayon) of Kaunas)

On Sunday, October 30, 1983, during the principal Mass, prayers were recited for Garliava resident Mrs. Jadvyga Bieliauskienė who had been arrested a year ago, and is now in prison. The evening before, some people introduced themselves to Monsignor Andrius Gustaitis by telephone as militia officers, and declared that they knew that a gathering was being organized, and at the same time, expressed great surprise that Mass could be offered for a living person. During the Mass, the sermon was delivered by Monsignor Gustaitis. After services, the entire congregation, together with Father Jonas Boruta, recited the rosary for the prisoners.

Pagramantis (Rayon of Tauragė)

On August 15, 1983, in the church of Pagramantis, for the second year, services of reparation took place for the desecration of the Blessed Sacrament. Well before the ceremonies, the Vice Chairwoman of the Tauragė Executive Committee had summoned the Chairman of the Pagramantis parish committee to sign a promise that Father Antanas Beniušis, Associate Pastor of Tauragė, would not be allowed to deliver the sermon.

During the reparation service, the rosary was recited twice for the priest-prisoners Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevičius. The third rosary, the believers recited while going in procession on their knees from the churchyard gates to the main altar. The procession took about forty-five minutes, with many youth and children participating. Afterwards, at 5:00 PM, Mass was offered. During the sermon, the Dean of Tauragė, Father Puzaras, urged the faithful to carry out their duties conscientiously, to defend their rights, parents to educate their children in their religion and to pray more for one another. After Mass in the churchyard, a reparation procession of the Blessed Sacrament took place. The services ended with the hymn, *Marija, Marija*.

Meškuičiai (Rayon of Šiauliai)

In October, 1983, a statue of the *Rūpintojėlis*, five meters tall, was brought to the Hill of Crosses, bearing the inscription:

"Return, Rupintojėlis, to brood by the wayside,
The withering rue will bloom beneath the cross.
The Lithuanian's tearstained cheeks will shine again,
And Mary's Holy Land will rise once more.

Kaunas 1983
A Group of Hymn-lovers.

For lack of time and manpower (the erection of the statue requires eight men), work on the *Rupintojėlis* remained unfinished that night.

On October 19, 1983, people coming to the Hill of Crosses could not find the statue. It had been cut up and hauled away somewhere. In its place the sponsors placed flowers and a small cross, tied with a bow inscribed, "On this spot, evil hands cut up the *Rupintojėlis*. Lord forgive them."

Utena

On August 14, 1983, the Sacrament of Confirmation was being administered in the church of Utena. Since morning, the church was full of people; there were almost two thousand confirmands alone. The only ones disturbing the solemnity were various officials sent to the church from the *Rayon* Executive Committee to look around. In the churchyard, a disturbance arose when the officials fell upon those selling religious articles, seized religious pictures, rosaries and crosses from them, twisted their arms and dragged them of to the militia station.

CATHOLICS IN THE SOVIET REPUBLICS

Zhitomir

The thirty-five year old organist at the church of Zhitomir, Sofija Bieliak, was sentenced to five years in prison and five years of exile for disseminating information about the apparition of the Mother of God at Fatima.

Riga

On September 10, two bus-loads of pilgrims (about sixty persons) were on their way from Riga to the religious festival at Šiluva, but they did not reach their destination. Not far from Šiluva, they were stopped by traffic police. The officers asked who had organized the pilgrims, and why they came to Lithuania to pray. Konstancija Cimanovskaya admitted being the organizer of the pilgrimage. Everyone was told to turn back. Since the people did not agree, they were taken off the bus and reached Šiluva by scheduled buses, while the militia escorted their rented buses to the border between Lithuania and Latvia and told the drivers never to return to Lithuania on such an errand.

The Plight of German Catholics in the USSR

At the invitation of Catherine the Great, many Germans settled along the Volga, and in certain regions of southern Ukraine. Before the deportations, there were about three million of them. A large number of them were Catholics. They had organized into parishes, had their own churches, priests and even a seminary. Even before World War II (about 1930), the government began closing the Germans' Catholic churches, and deporting them to Kazakh.

When Hitler attacked Russia, all the Germans were deported from Ukraine and scattered throughout the broad reaches of Kazakh. During the war, they took men and often women for the so-called "labor army", where many died from malnutrition. After the war, some of the Germans returned to the Volga basin, while others settled in the cities and villages of Kirghiz, Tadzhik and Uzbek, or remained in Kazakh where as the *Lietuvos tarybinė encyklopedia (Lithuanian Soviet Encyclopedia)* mentions, about one million Germans live.

During the war and immediately afterwards, the German Catholics did not have a single church, nor any priest. Only when priests were rehabilitated from the camps, some of them, including some Lithuanians, began ministering to the faithful, at first, visiting them unofficially and later, with permission. In some cases, the permissions were revoked, e.g., Father Antanas Šeškevičius, after working officialy for two years in Slavgorod, the Region of Altay, was required to leave for work in Kanta, not far from Frunze.

Settling near Frunze, he began with oral permission to erect a house of prayer. After some time, the house of prayer was closed, and Father Šeškevičius was arrested and sentenced in 1967. The government had promised the faithful of Kustanay that it would certify a priest for official work. Coming from Lithuania, Father Albinas Dumbliauskas obtained a house of prayer, and after working there almost half a year, again lost the right to work legally.

Only five years later was another priest allowed to work officially among the faithful of Kustanay. Similarly, the faithful were "allowed" to obtain a house of prayer and to have their own priest in Frunze, Alma-Ata Aktyubinsk and elsewhere. Only when the Germans began demanding the right to have a church with a priest was this granted to the faithful of German nationality in Karaganda and Tadzhik.

In Karaganda, Father Dumbliauskas began to work in Tadzhik (Dushanbe), Kurgan-Tyube and Vakhsh. Three parishes were established with Father J. Svidnickis began to minister. In Kurgan-Tyube, in 1982, a house of prayer was erected where Father J. Bieleckis (sic) began to minister. In 1980, in Celinograd, Father B. Babrauskas began ministering to the faithful.

Presently in Kazakh, ten priests are working three in Karaganda, and one each in: Alma-Ata, Aktyubinsk, Celinograd, Dzhambul, Kustanay, Krasnoarmeysk and Prokop'yevsk; in Kirghiz there are two. Some of them have to minister to the faithful, not only where they live, but throughout the region. This year, the German Catholics lost five priests: the pastor of Pavlodar; Bishop Alexander, who had worked in Karaganda; and the pastor of Frunze, Father Keller. In Tadzhik, Father J. Bielickis (sic) resigned because the climate was bad for his health, and Father P. Krikščiūkaitis left Dushanbe.

Hence at the present time, all of Tadzhik (where there were three communities) has been left without a priest, and the entire region of Pavlodar (where three communities also were operating) has been left without a priest.

There are some faithful in Tashkent and next to it, in Uzbek, but these are not organized as a parish, and have no priest. Many German Catholics have left the wide expanses of the Russian republic: In the Regions of Prokhlodnoy, Saratov, Volgograd, Chelyabinsk, Omsk, Tomsk and Novosibirsk, and in the land of Altay.Currently, there is a priest only in Novosibirsk (since 1982); in the region of Saratov, Tomsk and the region of Altay — communities of faithful are organized in Volchikha — the committees of twenty are registered; hence they have the right to a house of prayer and a priest. There are especially many Germans in the region of Omsk (according to the Soviet Lithuanian Enciclopedia, about 120,000 residents) many of whom are Catholics.

The faithful who have no priest often gather in the house of prayer, and if they do not have one of these, in the homes, for Sunday prayer, for holy days, Lenten, June and May devotions.

Currently, the following places are looking for priests: Marx (Region of Saratov), Prokhlodnoy (Northern Caucasia), the Region of Petropavlovsk, the Region of Pavlodar, Tomsk, Volchikha (Region of Altay), Dushanbe and Kurgan-Tyube. There are enough candidates for the priesthood from among Germans themselves, but so far, only a few are studying at the seminary in Riga.

NEW UNDERGROUND PUBLICATIONS

Lietuvos ateitis (Lithuania's Future) Nr. 6, a periodical publication for youth, appeared at the end of May, this year, discussing national problems and problems of interest to Lithuanian youth.

Lietuvos ateitis Nr. 7, dedicated to the convicted Father Alfonsas Svarinskas, appeared at the end of September. In the publication, the trial of Father Svarinskas and the arrest of Father Tamkevičius are widely discussed, and a message from the believing youth of Lithuania to Lithuanian youth living abroad appears.

Aušra (The Dawn) No. 35/75. In February, 1983, the thirty-fifth issue of the underground publication, *Aušra*, appeared. In the publication, the article entitled "One Hundred Years for *Aušra*" received particular notice, in which the climate nineteen years after the press ban when the first issue of the first Lithuanian newspaper, *Aušra*, appeared is thoroughly described. It was the beginning of the Lithuanian renaissance, the first conscious step of Lithuanians into their future. According to Professor Biržiška, "This was the greatest revolution in the world, known to history: The rising up of a small nation, barely beginning to be conscious of itself against the great Russian-German-Polish alliance," the publication writes.

Aušra Nr. 35 expresses protest against the arrest of Father Svarinskas; it tells its readers about the Lithuanian convicts in Zone 385/3-5 of Mordovia. In the publication, much space is devoted to the article, "Forty Years (1904 - 1944)", in which the economic life of Lithuania and the country's cultural activity is surve

Aušra Nr. 36/76. In its introductory article of the April, 1983 issue of *Aušra*, entitled, *Aušra*, an example for Today, the historical significance of the publication for the Lithuanian nation is discussed: " . . . In the dawn of the ages, it found basis for national self-respect, and from there, it evoked an ideal for the future."

It demonstrates that today, also, there is a striving for the same values, but with greater force, on a broader scale, and with more refinement, "Therefore, the urging to learn from the past, not to give up values defended back then, and to be defended today."

The article, "Jėga ir teisė" ("Force and the Law"), comes out for true democracy, in which an important role is played by Christianity, with its view of mankind as an incomparable value. Quite a bit of space is devoted in the publication to prisoners and exiles from our nation going the way of the Gulag; questions dealing with morality — strong family structure — are considered, and the article "Keturiasdešimt metų (1904 - 1944)" ("Forty Years"), is continued.

Lithuanian, don't forget!

Father Alfonsas Svarinskas
Father Sigitas Tamkevičius
Jadvyga Bieliauskienė
Sergei Kovalev
Antanas Terleckas
Julius Sasnauskas
Povilas Pečeliūnas
Docent Vytautas Skuodis
Mečislovas Jurevičius
Balys Gajauskas
Gintautas Iešmantas
Viktoras Petkus
Algirdas Statkevičius

and others bear the chains of captivity, so that you might live and believe freely!

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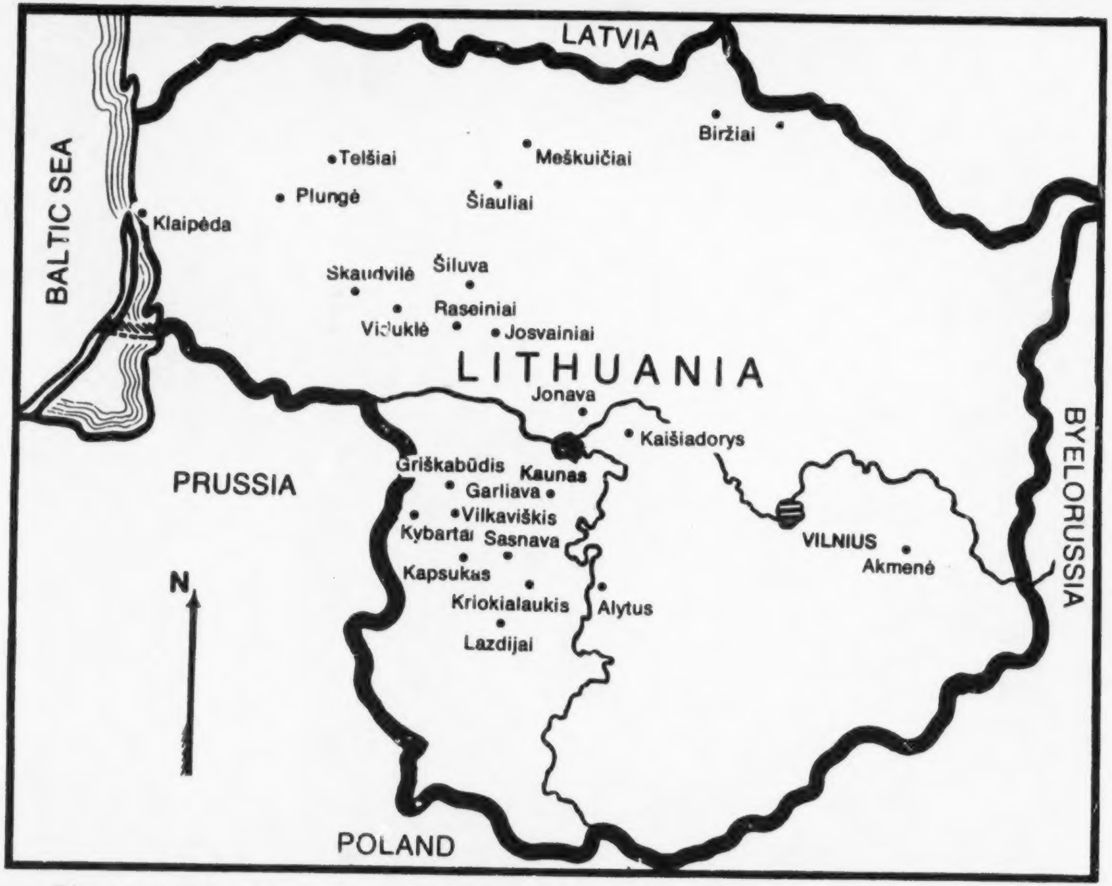
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Places mentioned in the CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LITHUANIA No. 61

The **Chairman**. Thank you very much.

I would like to take particular note of and evidence the pleasure of the committee at the fact that Marian Skabeikis is accompanying you. She is the editor of the Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, which is a very forceful and useful document.

I believe we have heard from every member of the panel now, so why do we not begin with our questions and ask you specifically about some of the problems one of our witnesses experienced in his own lifetime. Certainly, Mr. Tartakovsky, if you could tell us something about your life in Kiev, would you tell us what special problems existed for Jewish students in the Ukraine schools?

Were Jewish schoolchildren harassed by other schoolchildren or by teachers? Were you denied privileges given to other students?

Mr. **Tartakovsky**. In the Soviet Union, all Jews are identified as Jews in their Soviet passports. It is an internal ID card. And if they are applying to any kind of high school, if they are applying to a university, they have to file an application form. Some schools do not accept any Jews at all, and it is very hard for them to get a job even after getting a degree from university for those people who were lucky enough to get in.

So it is not like—it is basically a very anti-Semitic system, which follows a Jew from when he was born until he will die. And I just would like to mention that it is not only for religious Jews. It is not only religious Jews who are persecuted in the Soviet Union, because "Jew" on your passport, it is not religion, it is nationality.

And for example, if there are some Jews, there are maybe a few, who would like to assimilate and become Christian and Catholic and they are going to church, they are still for Soviet purposes Jewish and they are persecuted as Jews.

The **Chairman**. Senator Pell.

Senator **Pell**. I have just one thought. Is it the system that produces the anti-Semitism or is it the Slav heritage? My own thought, having traveled in that part of the world before the war, is that that is the most anti-Semitic part of the world.

I can remember even after the war there was a miniature pogrom in Bratislava, where I was, and there is a degree of anti-Semitism, I think, in Slavic countries, which we do not realize. It is not so much a Communist system as it is a Slavic heritage. I think that is one of the facts of life.

What would be your reaction to that?

Mr. **Tartakovsky**. I agree with you, Senator Pell. It is the character of the people who live there. To some extent, they are more or less anti-Semitic. But mostly it is encouraged by the Soviet Government.

Senator **Pell**. I remember being in Poland before the war, and the Jews were not nicely treated there, either.

Mr. **Tartakovsky**. Yes; that is correct. But mostly it is the system of the Soviet Government. They are against Hebrew as a language; they are against anything that is Jewish.

The **Chairman**. Thank you, Senator Pell.

There was an American consultate in Kiev, Ukraine, which was terminated by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. You lived in Ukraine when there was an American consulate there. Can you describe to us what that consulate meant to you?

Was it helpful to you in your efforts to emigrate? Was it helpful to your family? Would it be helpful to other Jews in Ukraine who are trying to emigrate to the United States or to join families in Israel?

Mr. **Tartakovsky**. I am from Kiev originally, and I remember hearing about the consul back in 1973, and I think it is a very good idea because Kiev is a very insulated city. It is not Moscow. There are no foreign diplomats, no foreign correspondents; and it is an additional link of communications between the two countries.

The establishment of an American consul in Kiev I see as a very positive development, not only just as a link of communications between Kiev Jews and the outside community, but also as a communication link between the two countries.

The **Chairman**. Reverend Butosi, I wonder if you could give us some feeling as to what the Congress of the United States can do in being most effective in promoting religious rights behind the Iron Curtain. What do you consider to be the most effective strategies and tactics that we might be able to use?

Maybe it is matter of psychology more than anything else. We certainly have been trying different approaches. Do you distinguish between the roles that Congress and the Executive should play in this process? How should they cooperate?

Reverend **Butosi**. Perhaps I can illustrate it, Mr. Chairman, with the case of the Reverend Ferenc Visky, who is a personal friend of mine, a colleague at the seminary, and I kept contact with him. He became a very prominent youth worker, and anyone who is dealing effectively with young people in the Communist realm is suspected.

So he was sentenced to 18 to 22 years imprisonment. He served 6½ years in prison. His wife was deported to the Danube Delta with seven children. Since he received amnesty, the family was reunited. But becasue they continued to be effective, they were searched. As my colleague said here, a search was made in his home looking for currency, jewelry, and Western pamphlets. They did not find jewelry, they did not find currency, but they did find Western religious material, and that is a crime. So he was forced to retire.

When I learned about this, I asked my friends to contact Senators, including the Secretary of State. As a result, Mr. Visky was called in, all charges were dropped, and the church had to reinstate him in his office. This is just an illustration to show that when not just a resolution is made, but a resolute action follows a resolution; then this can be done.

Another thing, of course, is the most-favored-nation hearing. I feel that whenever we are able to do something along this line and express our disfavor about treating religion as it is treated, that is another aspect of what the Senate can do.

I very much like your suggestion that a summit conference should be held where these questions are openly discussed, with good will but determination.

The **Chairman**. Senator Pell.

Senator **Pell**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I feel particularly moved at seeing Mr. Hvasta here and hearing about the problems that he has mentioned, because his knowledge of the area is very great. But why do you think that the relationship is particularly bad in Czechoslovakia? Why are church-state relations so dismal in Czechoslovakia, worse than they are in any other country behind the Iron Curtain?

Mr. HVASTA. Well, Senator, I think the effect of Poland is so threatening to the regime, there is such a fear that the same thing will happen, mainly in Slovakia and Moravia and even in Bohemia, as is happening in Poland, that I think it is a very myopic and almost a psychological fear that the effects will be somewhat like Dubcek's time, when the Soviets came in with their armies.

So this is, they are trying to do it piecemeal in each individual region. In Slovakia it is the church which is really being suppressed, because the majority of the people—you have lived there and you know—their basic roots, they are agrarian, farmers and so on. They are very faithful. They believe in the church and their bishops and priests.

In the Bohemian lands it is the Charter '77, which is more relevant; of the former idealistic Communists who see reality and they would rather instead get more freedoms a la Dubcek style, as it was before.

Senator PELL. Your mentioning Dubcek makes me relize that the putting down of the glorious spring of 1968, as the Russians did, really showed the failure of communism, not its success, because when you and I were there 20 years earlier the Communists took over that country with, I think it was, one death and not a Russian soldier used.

And after 20 years exposure to the blessings of communism, it took hundreds of thousands of Russian soldiers and many people killed. And I have always felt that that showed what failure and what a rotten system communism is.

What is the difference in the situation of Catholics in Bohemia and Moravia as opposed to Slovakia?

As you know, I am a strong, enthusiastic Slovak nationalist at heart.

Mr. HVASTA. The basic pattern is the same. It is directed from Moscow through Prague. In Slovakia there are only three dioceses—well, in the entire Czechoslovakia there are only three or four dioceses that are filled with bishops.

Senator PELL. Is this in Slovakia or in Bohemia?

Mr. HVASTA. Both in Slovakia and in Bohemia. The other areas have been vacant. They refuse to fill them—like the Byzantine Catholic Church, they have refused the last two times to permit the Byzantine Catholic bishop to go to Rome for Rome's conferences with the bishops.

It is the constant refusal, I think primarily because of the fear of the influence from Poland and second because there is no real pressure that we have offered, that we have exerted against the Prague regime.

Senator PELL. One further question, following up on that. Do you think by any chance that the bishops have been approved by the Pope, that they are in pectorem—I think that is the phrase, in his heart—but have not been announced?

Mr. HVASTA. Well, as you know, the invitation has been sent by the Archbishop of Prague, Cardinal Tomasek, to the Pope to come next year for a visit on the 11th century anniversary of St. Cyril Methodius.

Senator PELL. That was not my question. My question was do you think the Pope has a full slate of bishops in his own heart—I think the word is "in pectoris;" I forget. Who knows? You know, Bishop.

Reverend BUTOSI. It means in his heart, in his secret heart, without announcing it.

Senator PELL. Yes, that is what I mean. Do you think that he has a full slate in his heart, the Pope does?

Mr. HVASTA. Oh, yes.

Senator PELL. I would just thank you very much for being with us today. I am particularly interested in the subject matter of this whole hearing. I have spent quite some time myself in that part of the world and I wish you all well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Dodd, if you would be good enough to finish up asking questions of this panel and call the next panel, I will be right back then.

Senator DODD [presiding]. I would be happy to do so, Mr. Chairman.

Let me apologize to our panel for coming in a little late, and especially to Bishop Butosi, whom I had hoped to formally present to this committee, and which I will now do since I am now the chairman and the only member here. I ask unanimous consent that my introductory remarks be made part of the record. Without objection, it so ordered. How is that? The power of being here alone.

[Senator Dodd's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to introduce you a friend and constituent of mine, Bishop John Butosi.

He is an outstanding religious and civic leader and we are fortunate to have him for the last 24 years ministering to the spiritual needs of believers in my State, Connecticut.

Beyond his church duties, Bishop Butosi is an important leader of his community with charitable, cultural and neighborhood activities too numerous to list. He is also an eminent diplomat for his church who has represented the United Church of Christ at conferences and assemblies on 4 continents.

And, finally, his concern extends to the religious believers of his native land, Hungary, and those Hungarians who live as minorities in the surrounding States, and who do not have the freedom to worship God that we enjoy here in the United States. Bishop Butosi has revisited the area of his origin many times, bringing aid, relief, spiritual assistance and solidarity to his brother clergymen under Communist oppression. He has first-hand experience and genuine expertise in the region.

Mr. Chairman, Bishop Butosi represents the best theological traditions of the "servant church". He serves his parish, his church, his adopted nation and the nation of his birth with equal distinction and dedication.

I am proud to present him to the committee as my friend and constituent.

Senator DODD. First of all, let me commend all of you for being here today, and I want to commend the chairman for holding these hearings. Over the past 3 or 4 years, I have had the chance to travel to Eastern Europe—actually going back further than that, going back to 1978, I was in the Soviet Union and this past summer I was in Hungary, Poland, and Yugoslavia.

I had a chance in all three countries to meet with church figures. I will never forget being in Kiev in Ukraine, trying to go to mass on Sunday. You cannot. I did go to mass in Leningrad and in Moscow, although I must tell you in Leningrad it was difficult trying to convince a taxicab driver to go to a Catholic Church. It was not just the absence of my fluency in Russian; there were obviously some other problems he had in taking me to the church.

At any rate, it is a significant problem. What I was impressed with in every one of the places that I was in was the tremendous level of devotion and commitment, particularly, I suppose, in Poland last summer. As a Catholic having spent a great deal of time in Latin America and other places where you have a sense of church influence, it does not even begin to compare.

And I say that with all due respect to Catholics in other parts of the world, but I have never seen the depth of devotion that I have witnessed there. It is hard to describe to people who have not seen it.

Let me just ask a general question. There was a recent report by the Italian prosecutors on the involvement of the Bulgarian Government, or at least of officials within that government, in a plot to assassinate the Pope. I do not know how many of you read the accounts on Sunday in the New York Times, where the reporter was able to get a copy of the report.

I wonder, just in the last couple of days or even prior to that, whether any of you had any explicit information that either corroborated that report or added to it or that might in some case not corroborate it. What sort of information do you have, if any, how well known within the Eastern bloc countries is that information about the investigation, for instance?

Is it well known that it was going on. How much information is getting back?

Father **Pugevičius**. It is as well known, Senator, as the radio services have been able to make it known. If I may at this piont, I would like to put in a word for more support for the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. They provide a very important service for the people behind the Iron Curtain.

We have not had time to get any specific information from Soviet-occupied Lithuania as to the reaction of Catholics there to the assassination attempt on the Pope. But I do not think I would be very far afield or would be going out on a limb at all if I were to say that it is the people behind the Iron Curtain who would be the least surprised to read what was published in the Times on Sunday.

It is we in the West who tend to keep a fairy tale vision of what is going on behind the Iron Curtain, for whatever reason, whether it is because we want our beer, pretzels and ballgames on Sunday afternoons not to be disturbed, we cannot be bothered to hear the bad news from that part of the world, or what it is.

But we are the ones who tend to be surprised and, I think, incredulous at what was published in the Times on Sunday.

Senator **Dodd**. Let me ask if there are any other distinguished panelists who want to comment on that general question. Bishop, do you have a comment?

Reverend **Butosi**. Not really on this, except that while I appreciate these hearings in that context, I realize that oftentimes, we are fully aware of human rights violations in Central America and

Africa, but somehow we tend to believe that everything is all right in Eastern Europe generally speaking in both Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches.

And when something of that nature happens, I think that we realize that we should pay attention to this part of the world. And I would like to congratulate you, Senator Dodd, that you did take the trip and with good preparation and good follow up to those three countries. And I consider you as one of those persons who are sensitive to that area of the world, and I am glad that you ask these questions. Keep on stressing, because to me this seems to be a missing part in our general orientation on foreign policy.

Mr. HVASTA. Senator, you represent the State where we have a lot of concentration of our Slovaks and Czechs, and no doubt you are very well aware of the number of refugees that you have from those areas, from those Iron Curtain countries.

Let us look at the record of the Soviets ever since that system has been established. The Pope was considered, obviously, one of the worst enemies of that system. It was so obvious to anybody who understands or realizes the situation that he would be targeted, No. 1.

And in view of what Claire Sterling and others who have written on this, as well as the Italian Government has written, I think the record speaks for itself. Having myself been over there—I spent 3½ years as an American. I went over as an exchange student in 1948, worked for Senator Pell. He was the vice consul over there.

And I was arrested and spent 3½ years in prison, just totally innocent, because they wanted to close the American consulate in Bratislava and they neded a scapegoat and I was the scapegoat. I spent 8 months in solitary. They beat the hell out of me.

I never made any absurd confession. I was a young kid, just 20 years old, just turning 21. So I went through the mill for 5½ years. I escaped. I was in hiding for 3 years and made my way to our Embassy in Prague, and 4 months later got out.

So anyone who understands, who has lived under that system, I mean, there is nothing to question—we are dealing with the mafia type. You know, revolutionary, what is a revolutionary? I mean, his goal is to achieve the political as well as whatever purpose.

They want what we have without paying for it. That is why they steal, they cheat. They steal our secrets because they cannot inspire their own people who have had the blinders for so long in the Soviet system, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, all of them. So they have to steal to get what we have.

So we appeal to you. Maybe I am just making an additional statement, but we appeal to you. Like when the gold was returned to Czechoslovakia about a year ago, almost stealthily, without really many of us knowing that it was going to be returned, because I would have wanted to say: Hey, I lost 5½ years of my life there, because since then I have been exonerated. They even offered to give me compensation.

I asked for $180,000 for 5½ years. They offered me $3,163, refused to even acknowledge the time that I was in hiding. If I would not have been unjustly arrested, I would not have had to risk my life. And two from my group of six were executed. One was killed and the other one died in prison.

So you hear my story, and I was an American. I mean, they dealt with me as an American. Can you imagine how they deal with their own subjects, with their own people?

So we appeal to you, because whenever a time comes when they want the most-favored-nation status; when they want those international bank guarantees to which we contribute extraordinarily through our banks—and it is our taxpayers' money—whenever they want to buy the most sophisticated technology which their people cannot produce or manufacture because of those blinders, because everybody is afraid to think, how is it going to come out, whether or not he is going to be arrested or imprisoned.

So there is nothing that they are not capable of doing, and unfortunately, notwithstanding that fact, we still offer—in my prepared statement we offer, we Czechs and Slovaks in the United States—there are over 5 million of us. We offer a dialog, so I will not have to be appearing before a committee speaking on behalf of those people, because what they are doing is to their own people. They are not doing it to us any more.

It is their own people that they are arresting, that they are threatening, that they are creating such a psychosis. How can those people live normally and develop, create and work for things? Like here in the United States we have had Michael Novak, Slovak; Eugene Cernan, astronaut; we have Dr. Gajdusek, who won the Nobel Prize for medicine.

Here is an aura of freedom. Czechoslovakia used to have that aura of freedom. It was second Switzerland.

So we appeal to you that whenever such issues—and we will sort of remind you when those issues come up. We will ask you: Hey, friend, why do you do this to your own people? Why do you not let them have that freedom of religion?

I mean, that is the most minutest of things for human, civilized human beings, because it is their priests—I am really amazed that they do not have the sense to think that everybody steals, everybody cheats, because that system inspires it. That is how they survive.

So instead, they should encourage those priests, say: Hey, keep them down; tell them about hell or heaven. You know, if you do not work—because they have to produce; everybody must produce—if you do not put in a full day, you are going to have a sin. Rather than creating that vacuum where everybody says: "It is mine, it is our own, it is state property, so I take it, I steal."

So you know, it is such a dichotomy. But the record shows from 1918, the record, whether it is in the Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia or now in Central America or other places, it is the same pattern, unfortunately. And I think it is time that we in the United States sort of understand and say: Look, who is going to be next? Because they are trying to shove and push wherever they can.

So back to that question, yes, I think anybody who understands—and I am 57 years old now—I would think that if they did not give a directive, they certainly knew about it; they did not say do not do it.

Senator DODD. You know what I think it is in part? If somebody wrote a novel which had as its plot a state-supported effort to assissinate the Pope, publishers probably would say: It is unrealistic; no one is even going to believe that at all.

I think it is so incredible that it goes beyond I think what you were saying a minute ago. It goes beyond comprehension.

I have a theory, too, in terms of my own generation and the now famous Churchill speech given in Missouri where he talked about the Iron Curtain. Too many people in my generation think that there was somehow a geographical occurrance with respect to Eastern Europe, and it fails to understand historically the relationship between the countries of Eastern Europe with Europe.

As the choice of words was a graphic one by Churchill, "the Iron Curtain," it almost mentally creates a picture where somehow this is naturally a part of the Soviet's domain in some way. That is totally unnatural, I am suggesting to you.

But somehow that visual impression of an Iron Curtain that divides these countries from the rest of the world has been created. Having just been in Hungary, Yugoslavia and Poland, I was struck in Budapest with how Western a city it is and of course, its history and its contribution to culture and music and so forth, which I do not think is appreciated strongly enough.

Interestingly, in Hungary one of my heroes—I guess as boys we have athletes who are heroes and the Olympic event, the modern pentathlon, is something I always pay attention to. I do not know many of my peers who did, but I always did.

And the one individual who was in effect the Joe DiMaggio, I guess, of the modern pentathlon is Hungarian, as you know, Bishop, Andras Balczo, and ten times he was world champion, in a five-event sport, two gold medals at the Olympics—an extraordinary feat athletically.

And I met with him, which was a great privilege for me, and the members of the so-called dissident community, if you will. And when I went down their stories of different things that happened, Balczo today I think leads horses around some public riding rink. Here is a person who could be a tremendous coach or something like that, but he is not allowed to do anything more meaningful.

It is not because he is politically active in the sense of being a political activist. He happens to be extremely spiritual and is extremely devoted, and that is his sin. It is devotion. He does not get involved in political activities at all except to the extent that he is a devout believer.

And to see this individual being deprived, in his country he is the most highly recognizable athletic figure—well, I got angry. They were going through this whole thing and described it, and I finally said: Let us do something, let us get a resolution adopted or something.

They said, Oh, for God's sake, do not do anything right now; it is better in Hungary right now than it has been in a long time.

I wonder, Bishop, if you might comment on that. I found myself getting so angry. They consider progress is made from where things were in 1956. I wonder if you might comment on how long-lived is that going to be?

Reverend Butosi. His name is Andras Balczo. He is world-known. I know him personally. He was in America. He was electrifying us.

But you hit the nail right on its head. Anyone in the Soviet Union who cannot be controlled by the state because he is controlled by the living spirit of God is a revolutionary, which they cannot take. They have to obliterate him. It is a threat to the whole system. It is a denial to their whole premise.

That kind of illustration that somebody can be a constructive member of society, as a matter of fact can bring national honor, and not in Communist trend but in the traditional Judeo-Christian devotion, that they cannot take.

And whenever I meet people, I try to tell them that men cannot live without God and the vacuum that you create cannot be filled with economic progress. Man does not live by bread alone. You need this spiritual orientation, and the society would gain because Balczos would be born and educated.

This is what we have to emphasize over and over again, because this is true in all countries. These people are not enemies by themselves. The system make them enemies by its prejudice, and Balczo is just an illustration, I feel, of that fact.

Youth in present-day Hungary, for example, is lost. They came together to discuss the issue in the Parliament. Hungary is first in suicide worldwide, second in alcoholism, third in abortions. These are symptoms of deep disturbance, which cannot be solved unless we have the religious conviction, and the Balczos are proving that. And yet, it is still not clear to them, because, by definition, they are atheists, they must be atheists, and a small minority dictatorship is enslaving the country and preventing them to really flourish.

I think this is the real issue that we are dealing with here in regard to Eastern Europe.

Senator Dodd. It is interesting. I will not drag this on, but there is a writer, Sandor Csoori, and I do not know whether this has changed or not from when we were there, but he writes poetry and prose, and his prose has been banned for 1 year.

These things are hard for Westerners to really comprehend. He wrote an introduction to a book written by a Czechoslovakian of Hungarian origin. It had nothing to do with Hungary. He wrote the introduction to a book by a Hungarian living in Czechoslovakia, a book published in the United States.

And for that, in Hungary, his prose has been banned for 1 year. As I say, it is almost beyond comprehension.

There was some talk that it may have been lifted recently. Is that true?

Reverend Butosi. Yes; he is presently in Finland, thank God, and his wife is touring the United States. I think the government made him a national hero by the imposition. I think he gained and the government lost, because again pointing to the very heart of the issues, you cannot fight with imprisonment and with restrictions against ideas that are lively and that are from the very heart of man.

Senator Dodd. Let me tell you that I happened to run into Arthur Schlesinger and I told him this story, and I asked him what he thought about it. And he said: Well, you see, in Hungary they take their writers seriously. [Laughter.]

Let me say again, with all due respect to your co-panelists, Bishop, it is a particular pleasure to have you here and to listen to your thoughts. They are so poignant.

I did not get to Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, or Romania on this particular trip, but let me say, you learn a lot. You learn a number of things. I shared a lot of personal experiences. I spent hours with Lech Walesa at the St. Brigette Church's Parish House in Gdansk. It obviously was a compelling experience.

Two members of our staff, Janice O'Connell on the committee staff and Bulcsu Veress, who is on my staff, were with me, and it was a remarkable experience. And then in Hungary, as I mentioned, and in Yugoslavia, just seeing some of the differences which exist and some of the hope.

But I am struck since then with that comment that I made a moment ago about the very graphic description and what it meant to an awful lot of people, that Iron Curtain concept. And I think we need to in a sense stop thinking about it as a curtain that divides, that becomes a natural divider in some way. If particularly my generation would spend more time and I think get to these countries, the people in Congress, it would be worthwhile.

Let me say that I believe Senator Percy has a couple of questions, and what I might do is submit them to you and have you respond for record, if you would. I know I speak for all of us on the committee when I say that we apreciate your testimony and we appreciate hearing your ideas and thoughts.

In the past I have opposed the MFN status for Romania, where they very conveniently, every time it comes up, usually a few months before—you can almost tell when it is coming; they usually engage in a bevy of activity, which then evaporates immediately upon the status being extended. That has been an ongoing problem.

We appreciate your comments and your thoughts as we deal with those issue. I thank you for coming.

I will call now our third panel. As you recall, Senator Percy asked me to do that. This panel will deal with law and practices of the Warsaw Pact states in the international legal framework for protecting and promoting religious rights.

By the way, I would invite all of our witnesses to stay and hear this final testimony. Our next witnesses are: Dr. Albert Boiter, who is an adjunct fellow of Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies and former director for Soviet research of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty; and Ms. Cathy Fitzpatrick, staff director for Soviet and East European Affairs, Helsinki Watch in New York.

The committee will be honored to take your statements. If they are prepared statements, we will accept those for the record. Please feel free either to read them or to paraphrase them, whatever you feel comfortable with, and then we will have some questions for you.

Why do we not begin with you, Ms. Fitzpatrick.

STATEMENT OF CATHY FITZPATRICK, STAFF DIRECTOR, SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN AFFAIRS, HELSINKI WATCH, NEW YORK, NY

Ms. FITZPATRICK. Thank you, Senator Dodd. I would like to read a few excerpts from my prepared statement.

Violations of religious freedoms reflect the efforts of East European and Soviet Governments to prevent the spread of mass movements not controlled by the state or the emergency of any independent institution within these societies monopolized by the Communist parties.

In the Soviet bloc, there are more citizens involved in religious movements, which often overlap with nationalist movements, than in any other type of movement. Because religious believers seek to educate their children in their own tradition, proselytize to gain new adherents, and circulate literature on spiritual questions and human rights abuse, they constitute a threat to entrenched bureaucrats.

Despite repressions in some countries, most notably in Poland and East Germany, the church has taken the lead in the civil rights movement. Churches serve as a sanctuary from state oppression, aid the families of political prisoners, advocate the right to conscientious objection, and provide protection for independent social movements, Solidarnosc in Poland, and Swords into Plowshares, the independent peace movement, in East Germany.

The fundamental rights to assembly, free expression, and a free press are essential to these religious communities, as is the Helsinki principle of the free flow of information and people regardless of frontiers. Yet, religious activists in these countries are often unable to publish freely their own religious literature in their homelands and usually suffer from a shortage of Bibles, Torahs, Korans, and other religious books, even when the government permits some publishing of these books.

Thus they are forced to print, copy, or import religious literature, at great risk, facing severe penalties for "engaging in unauthorized manufacturing," as such activity is often construed, or for "disseminating slanderous statements," a charge to which any independent publishing activity is vulnerable.

For some minorities in the countries of the Soviet bloc, national identity is chiefly expressed through religious traditions. Thus, a state discriminatory policy toward minorities often takes the form of religious persecution. For Hungarian Christians in Romania or Moslems in Yugoslavia or Ukrainian Uniates, the issues of ethnic self-determination and the practice of religion are tightly interwoven and minority rights must be defended in order to promote freedom of religion.

Because of the threat independent religious leaders pose to these states, their potential for leading mass movements, they frequently suffer the most brutal kind of persecution. Incidents of beatings, torture, threats, and intimidation of religious believers are among the highest for all dissenters.

Of those dissenters who have died under suspicious circumstance in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the last 5 years, most have been religious activists, including four Lithuanian Catholic priests, two Uniate Church activists in the Ukraine, and recently an ethnic Hungarian priest in Romania.

Religious believers in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were prominent among those who first sought to invoke the guarantees of the Helsinki accords. This brought new hope to religious believers and sparked numerous appeals and protests by them concerning the restriction of their rights and harassment by the state.

The concluding document of the most recent Helsinki review conference offers more guarantees to religious activists. It provides stronger language on religious rights and family reunification than the original Helsinki accord, particularly with regard to the role of the individual in achieving the goals of the Helsinki process.

Although the language in the recent concluding document is an improvement over what went before, some provisions are weakly formulated as a result of the need for consensus by all the 35 participating states. Some have escape clauses such as "within the constitutional framework," which can be used by Soviet bloc states to circumvent religious rights.

It was partly in response to this stalemate produced by clashing Soviet and American interests at the Madrid conference to review the Helsinki accord that U.S. Helsinki Watch helped to launch the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, whose headquarters is in Vienna, Austria. Participants in the federation include citizens Helsinki committees in Canada, France, The Netherlands, Norway, the United States, Germany, Austria, and Sweden.

The federation also maintains close ties to beleaguered Helsinki monitoring groups in Poland and Czechoslovakia, to the now suspended Helsinki monitoring in the Soviet Union, and to citizens in other East European countries who monitor and promote compliance with international human rights agreements.

The federation affirms the Helsinki principle of the citizen's right to know and act upon his rights and recognizes that citizens themselves must defend and extend their rights and monitor their government's human rights performances. Where this is not possible due to state repression, their colleagues in other countries must assist them in obtaining the right to monitor human rights and speak out about abuses in their countries when they are silenced.

The Helsinki Federation draws on a number of reports that are provided by groups in Europe, such as Keston College, Faith in the Second World, and U.S.S.R. News Briefs. Some of these groups have good samizdat connections in Eastern Europe through groups such as the Polish Helsinki Watch Committee, Charter '77 in Czechoslovakia, and Ellenpentok in Romania.

It has been our experience that there is no lack of information on abuse of religious freedom in the East. What is needed is improvement in the mechanisms for raising religious persecution in governmental and nongovernmental forums and in publicizing it in the media.

Defense of persecuted religious activists in the East should not just be the domain of their coreligionists in the West, although certainly churches and religious organizations play a crucial role in supporting their fellow believers. International nongovernment human rights organizations, the U.S. Congress, and European parliaments should all defend these rights.

Given the current deadlock in Soviet-American relations, Helsinki Watch has identified several avenues where advocacy of religious rights may be more successfully pursued. Coreligionists may successfully promote the rights of their fellow believers in that they may be viewed as expressing genuine solidarity with members of their denominations.

Religious groups with ecumenical concerns or groups with no particular affiliation play an important role in religious rights advocacy in presenting the issue neutrally in civil rights terms.

European groups with evenhanded human rights programs are in a good position now to raise violations with Soviet and East European officials, because they are removed from the arena of Soviet-American hostilities.

The religious left and participants in the disarmament movement in Europe and in North America could well have the most leverage now with East European officials and state-sponsored religious figures, because the Soviet bloc is vitally interested in good relations with the Western peace movement.

Finally, it is important that radio stations that broadcast to the Soviet bloc and which are funded by the United States identify and adequately serve equally all the religious populations of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union without religious or political bias, since these broadcasts are the single most important way in which the United States can sustain religious movements there.

This is particularly important for small religious communities that are not members of either official denominations or organized unofficial groups. Radio Liberty, for example, has sufficient programming for Russian Orthodox believers, who make up the majority of the religious in the European part of the U.S.S.R. They also have some cultural programming for Soviet Jews. But there are currently no programs that serve the more than 5 million Protestants of the U.S.S.R. and the more than 4 million Catholics.

The independent or the unofficial churches are the most persecuted in the U.S.S.R. For example, some 200 of the more than 1,000 known political prisoners in the Soviet Union are Baptists. But Radio Liberty, although supported by the United States, a country with a strong Protestant tradition, offers the Protestants of the U.S.S.R. no programs of their own, nor does it accord any time on religious broadcasts to Protestant pastors or lay persons.

The International Helsinki Federation is now preparing for followup conferences to the Madrid review conference, particularly the cultural forum in Budapest, Hungary, a forum which will be attended by leading cultural figures and state representatives and will provide an opportunity to raise the issue of suppression of religious activity, particularly in regards to the dissemination of religious literature, and the preservation of churches, religious monuments and archives from state interference.

Other followup conferences to review the human rights provisions of the Helsinki accord and issues of human contacts will follow in subsequent years.

[Ms. Fitzpatrick's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CATHY FITZPATRICK

My name is Cathy Fitzpatrick. I am Staff Director of Soviet and East European Affairs for the U.S. Helsinki Watch Committee, a nongovernmental organization that promotes compliance with the human rights provisions of the 1975 Helsinki accords. Helsinki Watch is concerned with human rights compliance in each of the 35 Helsinki signatory countries and has devoted special attention to those Helsinki countries in which severe and systematic violations occur—the U.S.S.R., Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia and Turkey.

When the Final Act of Security and Cooperation in Europe (the Helsinki accord) was signed by 35 nations in 1975, Western government officials and public leaders did not immediately see its usefulness as an instrument to promote human rights. Human rights activists in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe were the first to recognize that the accord was a public statement of human rights commitments to which their governments might be held. The subsequent Helsinki review conferences provided a forum where human rights violations could be publicized and offending governments called to account. Having exhausted the avenues of appeal for human rights compliance in their own countries, to no avail, Soviet bloc citizens appealed to U.S. and European government leaders to defend their rights at Helsinki review conferences. A citizens Helsinki monitoring movement was launched in Moscow in 1976 that eventually spread to other Soviet cities, to Eastern European countries, and to the United States and Western Europe. These citizens' "watch" committees brought pressure on their respective governments to abide by their obligations under the Helsinki accord.

With the estalishment of Communist regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, religious freedom was greatly eroded through a combination of closing of churches, arrest and imprisonment of clergy and lay activists, restrictive legislation, and indoctrination in the official state ideology of atheism. Some denominations won state recognition and some tolerance of their religious activities in exchange for submission to state controls. Others acted independently organizations and were subject to vigorous persecution by the state.

Religious believers in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were prominent among those who sought to invoke the guarantees, of the Helsinki accord signed by their governments, that: "The participating States will recognize and respect the freedom of the individual to profess and practice, alone or in community with others, religion or belief acting in accordance with his conscience."

The signing of the Helsinki accord brought new hope to Soviet bloc religious communities that had suffered state repression over the years. It sparked numerous appeals and protests by religious believers concerning the restriction of their rights and harassment by the state. These statements were often issued by communities not recognized by the State, or by who went beyond the bounds of religious activity sanctioned by the state. Clergy of the officially recognized churches, such as the Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church, also increasingly spoke out in defense of believers' rights.

When it became clear that the Soviet and East European states had no intention of making their systems flexible enough to incorporate their obligations to respect religious rights under the Helsinki accord, some members of religious groups began to seek compliance with another human rights principle of the International Covenant on Civil and Political liberties (incorporated into the Helsinki accord), the right to leave one's country. Among these were Soviet Jews and Pentecostals, Baptists from Romania, and many others. The Helsinki principle concerning the reunification of families is often invoked in support of these individuals, since by and large the Eastern regimes do not recognize the right to emigration, except to rejoin family members. Here are some examples of what took place:

In December 1976, at a press conference sponsored by the Moscow Helsinki Watch Committee, the Pentecostal Emigration Councils released a 500 page document entitled, "My People, Let Us Leave This Place," detailing the history of their persecution in the U.S.S.R. They appealed to the signatories of the Helsinki accord requesting them to assist the Pentecostals in emigrating to their countries.

In the Spring of 1977, six Romanian pastors who had attended the 17th Congress of the Baptist Churches in Bucharest addressed an appeal to the Helsinki Final Act signatories protesting state interference in religious affairs. The report outlined incidents of discrimination against believers in the areas of education, employment, and the right of free association. Some of the clergymen suffered reprisal for their appeal and eventually several left the country.

In November 1980, the Lithuanian Catholic Committee to Defend the Rights of Believers (formed in 1978) appealed to the Madrid review conference describing the persecution of Catholics in Lithuania and listing cases of violations of religious freedom.

Violations of religious freedoms reflect the efforts of these governments to prevent the spread of mass movements not controlled by the state, or the emergence of any independent institution within societies monopolized by the Communist party. Because religious believers seek to educate their children in their own traditions, proselytize to gain new adherents, and circulate literature on spiritual questions and human rights abuse, they constitute a threat to entrenched bureaucracies.

Despite repression, in some countries, most notably Poland and the GDR, the church has taken the lead in the civil rights movement. Churches serve as a sanctuary from state repression, aid the families of political prisoners, advocate the right to conscientious objection, and provide protection for independent social movements—Solidarnosc in Poland and Swords into Plowshares, the peace movement, in East Germany.

The fundamental rights to assembly, free expression, and free press are essential to religious communities, as is the Helsinki principle of the "Free flow of information and people regardless of frontiers." Yet religious activities in these countries are often unable to publish freely their own religious literature in their homelands, and usually suffer from a shortage of Bibles, Torahs, Korans, and other religious books, even when the government permits some publishing of these books. Thus they are forced to print, copy, or import religious literature, at great risk, facing severe penalty for "engaging in unauthorized manufacturing" as such activity is often construed, or for "disseminating slanderous statements"—a charge to which any independent publishing activity is vulnerable.

For some minorities in the countries of the Soviet bloc, national identity is chiefly expressed through religious traditions. Thus a state discriminatory policy toward minorities often takes the form of religious persecution. Here, the issues of ethnic self-determination and the practice of religion are tightly interwoven, and minority rights must be defended in order to promote freedom of religion.

Because of the threat independent religious leaders pose to the state, and their potential for leading mass movements, they frequently suffer the most brutal kind of persecution. Incidents of beatings, torture, threats and intimidation of religious believers are among the highest for all dissenters. Of those dissenters who have died suspicious deaths in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the last 5 years, most have been religious activists.

The following are only a few of the recent examples of religious persecution in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. They illustrate the patterns of violations of religious rights as well as the type of independent activity in which church activists engage.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

According to Keston College, the "underground Church" in Czechoslovakia has spread widely in the last few years. Members meet in private homes for prayer and mass, at times conducted by some of the 500 priests who have been clandestinely ordained. For many years, authorities have refused to approve bishops nominated by the Vatican. Approximately 100 priests are reportedly in detention or serving sentences; hundreds of participants in the underground church are harassed by authorities. Three unofficial samizdat religious journals are said to have a circulation of about 7,500 copies.

On September 23, 1984, Jiri Snajdr, a mining technician and Jan Mokry, a worker, were sentenced to 10 to 12 months' respectively under Art. 178 of the Criminal Code for "obstructing the state supervision of the churches and religious bodies" by holding "illegal masses" in private homes.

A similar charge was brought against Fr. Stefan Podolinsky, a Franciscan priest from Brezno, on May 27, 1983. Fr. Podolinsky was charged with possession of "unauthorized" religious literature and for his refusal to join the state-sponsored peace organization Pacem in Terris. When Fr. Podolinsky was to be tried on August 14, 1983, about 50 supporters entered the court room and began to pray. The police searched everyone and expelled them from the building. The trial was postponed, Fr. Podolinsky was released the next day, and the prosecutor withdrew the indictment.

Members of the Franciscan order have been particularly targeted for persecutions under Art. 178. Some 3,400 Catholics in Czechoslovakia signed a protest letter to Frantisek Tomasek, Archbishop of Prague, criticizing the authorities' treatment of Franciscan priests. The appeal, released on June 7, 1983, in Vienna, stated that on March 27, 1983, more than 250 activist priests were searched and interrogated simultaneously in 16 towns. Seven are still in detention: Vojtech Ales Slamal; Frantisek Michael Pometlo; Jiri Mazanec,; Jaroslav Jachym; Jaroslav Brazda; Antonin Smid; and Peter Rucka.

In August 1983, Fr. Josef Dolista was charged with violating the laws prohibiting private religious instruction. He had been teaching children catechism in a private home. Another priest, Fr. Romas Kondarik, had his license to practice his ministry revoked for breaking the laws stipulating that the church must be under state control.

Josef Kajnek, priest and administrator of a rectory in Usti nad Orlicki was detained for 48-hours in the spring of 1984 after security police searched the rectory and his home and confiscated religious literature. He was charged with showing religious slides shows to children and deprived of the state's permission to practice his ministry.

Fr. Vaclav Maly, a Catholic priest active in the civil rights movement Charter 77, has been detained, interrogated, and beaten on several occasions since his release from prison in 1979. Most recently he was detained with other Charter 77 activists in March 1984 in connection with a complaint received by a Western human rights organization with regard to the treatment in Czechoslovakia of Cuban and Vietnamese workers.

Bronislav Borovsky, Alois Gabaj, and Tomas Konc, young Slovak Catholics, were detained at the Czechoslovak-Polish border on December 11, 1983 and charged with smuggling religious literature from Poland. They are now in pre-trial detention in Kosice.

Jozef Juarcek, Jozef Sadovsky, and Ota Svec were detained, interrogated and beaten in Velka Mana by security police for distributing petitions asking the President of Czechoslovakia to allow Pope John Paul II to visit Czechoslovakia. A petition with a brief text, "Holy Father, Please Come to Czechoslovakia," has been signed by more than 17,000 Czechoslovak citizens.

EAST GERMANY

Last year, 200,000 people attended seven different congresses organized by the Protestant Churches to mark the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther. Last July, 100,000 people participated in a Lutheran gathering in Dresden.

In September 1983, Lothar Rothau, deacon and peace activist in Halle, was fired from his church position, arrested, and sentenced to 3 years of prison.

Nine people, seven of whom were employed by the Evangelical Church in Cottbus, were arrested between November 1982 and February 1983. They were sentenced in April 1983 to terms of imprisonment ranging from 2 years and 6 months to 3 years and 6 months for "treasonous passing of information" under Art. 99. According to Amnesty International, the charges indicate that the individuals attempted to contact organizations abroad about their activities. Members of the group reportedly expressed support for the peace movement, including wearing the "Swords into Plowshares" badge popular in East Germany.

HUNGARY

The news agency Kathpress reported on June 6, 1984, that Hungarian police had confiscated 119 volumes of theological writings by fundamentalist Catholic groups, known as basic communities. The groups have been gathering prayers, theological texts and reflections on Christian life into a yearbook and have distributed it to members as a Christmas present. The books, typed and bound by hand, were regarded by police as an infringment of Hungary's press laws. They fined two members, Ignac Kiraly and Joszef Merza, in whose possession the books were found.

Some members of the base communities have encouraged conscientious objection to military service. They are associated with dissident Piarist priest Gyorgy Bulanyi, a widely known pacifist. Laszlo Cardinal Lekai and his bishops have in effect been told to bring the grass-roots religious movement of religious renewal under control. Last June, Cardinal Lekai suspended Fr. Bulanyi from his right to celebrate mass on the ground that his theological teachings contradicted Roman Catholic doctrine. At least eight other Roman Catholic priests allied with Fr. Bulanyi have been removed from their parishes.

POLAND

In May 1983, security police broke into the Church aid office of St. Martin's Church in Warsaw, destroying the door and disrupting the office. The office was involved in aiding political prisoners. Police severely beat several people, including

Barbara Sadowska (whose son Grzegorz Prxemyk died in detention after police beatings), and then took the individuals to a remote area outside Warsaw where they were left to fend for themselves.

Fr. Stanislaw Malkowski, active in support of civil rights and political prisoners, has suffered several burglaries, including an incident where no valuables were taken but a cardboard box file with his sermons and homilies were stolen. In March 1984, security police broke into his apartment after he refused them entry, searched his home, and took him away for questioning. He is accused of engaging in printing illegal publications and is under investigation.

Fr. Jerzy Popieluszko, involved with Warsaw workers since the July 1980 strikes, was summoned for interrogation in December 1983 and taken to a flat given to him by his aunt, but where he does not reside. Police investigators discovered explosives, ammunitions, 15,000 copies of underground publications, and leaflets calling for armed uprising. Fr. Popieluszko spent a night in jail and was released the next day. He has stated that the provenance of the items discovered in the apartment is a mystery to him and he views the events as a provocation. If convicted, he faces 12 years of imprisonment. On Christmas day, 12,000–15,000 people jammed the streets near St. Stanislaw church to hear his sermon.

Fr. Mieczyslaw Nowak, one of 69 priests labelled "extremist" by the Polish authorities, was reassigned in February from St. Joseph's Church in Warsaw's industrial suburb of Ursus, a center of Solidarity activism, to Leki Koscielne, a remote village west of Warsaw. Worshippers at mass the following Sunday openly criticized Cardinal Jozef Glemp's delegates who defended the Church's decision on the basis that the transfer protected Fr. Nowak from further questioning by the authorities. On February 20, nine Poles entered St. Joseph's Church and vowed to fast until the Church reinstated Fr. Nowak to his former parish. Fr. Nowak himself appealed to the protesters to end the sit-in and the strikers agreed to suspend the strike.

ROMANIA

Dissident sources in Romania suspect that Fr. Gaza Palfi, 43, a Hungarian priest who worked in Odorhei, Transylvania, was murdered by the security police. Fr. Palfi gave a sermon at midnight mass on Christmas eve opposing the government's decision to declare Christmas Sunday a work day. He reminded his congregation that in neighboring Hungary, the day was an official holiday. The day after his sermon he was arrested by the police and beaten severely, particularly in the area of his liver. He was taken to a clinic in Tigru-Mures, where he died 2 months later at the end of February after not responding to treatment. The autopsy was not made public, and the death certificate stated that his death was due to liver cancer. Two hundred and six priests gathered in protest at his funeral.

In 1983, a Protestant priest of the Hungarian minority who was active in demonstrating his disagreement with the regime was run over by a truck on a sidewalk.

Fr. Georghe Calciu continues to remain in prison despite frequent international protests on his behalf. He was sentenced in 1979 to 10 years of imprisonment for his leadership in the Orthodox renewal movement, the Army of the Lord and his activities with the free trade union group SLOMR. Fr. Calciu, 59, has already spent 20 years in prison.

U.S.S.R.

Four priests of the Lithuanian Catholic church have been killed in suspicious accidents in the last several years; a Uniate Church clergyman died in prison and a Uniate woman church activist was killed in a suspicious accident. There are numerous incidents of beatings of religious activists.

Religious activists sentenced to political terms are frequently re-sentenced as they reach the end of their terms; Protestants have been particularly victimized. Galina Vilchinskaya, 24, who served 3 years for teaching children's Bible classes, was released in August 1982 then re-arrested in November 1982 and sentenced to 2 years of imprisonment. Pastor Rudolf Klassen, 52, was due to finish a 3-year term on June 20, 1983; he was not released and new charges were brought against him. Pastor Yakov Skornyakov, 55, was to complete his 5-year term last July. But the KGB subjected him to new charges, although he is seriously ill, Pastor Yevgeny Pushkov was released in May 1983 after serving 3 years in labor camp; he was rearrested May 27 and sentenced to another 4 years. Pastor Pavel Rytikov was released in August 1982 after serving 3 years in labor camp and was rearrested a third time in April 1983 and sentenced to 2 years of imprisonment.

Aleksandr Semchenko, leader of a youth group in the Moscow community of registered Baptists was sentenced to 3 years of labor camp on charges of distributing religious literature. Semchenko and two other members of the community were investigated in 1978 in connection with a case involving a clandestine studio where foreign religious radio broadcasts and religious music were taped.

In April 1982 authorities discovered an unofficial circle that had been producing religious samizdat. They searched a dozen homes, arrested four men, and seized more than 130 Xerox-copied religious texts. Lists of religious believers from various regions, apparently people who had placed orders for the literature, indicate that the circle distributed samizdat far beyond Moscow.

Five believers who operated the Seventh Day Adventist press True Witness were arrested. Thirteen Moslems were imprisoned for printing their own copies of the Koran.

Zoya Krakhmalnikova, editor of a samizdat religious periodical called Hope was arrested in August 1983 and sentenced to labor camp for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda."

Fr. Gleb Yakunin, Russian Orthodox priest and organizer of the Christian Committee in Defense of Believers' Rights, is still in labor camp. He was arrested in 1979 and sentenced to 5 years of labor camp and 5 years of internal exile for his monitoring of religious persecution in the Soviet Union.

Fr. Alfonsas Svarinskas was sentenced to 7 years of prison and 3 years of exile in May 1983. He was one of the five priests who founded the Catholic Committee in the Defense of Believers' Rights in Lithuania. Thirty-eight thousand people signed petitions of protest to General Secretary Andropov concerning his arrest.

Soviet Jewish activist and Hebrew teacher Iosif Begun was sentenced to 7 years of labor camp and 5 years of exile in October 1983 for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda." All of his visits have been cancelled.

YUGOSLAVIA

Religious revival is under way in Yugoslavia's three main religious groups, Catholics, Moslems, and Serbian Orthodox. The regime has generally tolerated the rising tide of renewal but there have been some attempts to intimidate Church members, press campaigns against individual bishops and priests, and even incidents of persecution among priests and believers. The recent trial of 13 Moslems in Sarajevo indicates the regime's concern about the spread of Islamic fundamentalism.

Alija Izetbegovic, 58-year-old retired lawyer, one of the 13 intellectuals tried in Sarajevo, was sentenced to 14 years of prison for "hostile propaganda" and "organizing for the purpose of hostile activity." He was influential among Yugoslavia's Moslem students and discussion groups in mosques and private homes. The prosecution focused on his "Islamic Declaration" which called on Moslems around the world to renew their faith and implement it in society, and criticized atheism and materialism. Izetbegovic maintains that he was tried for his beliefs; he is not charged with committing or advocating violence.

Fr. Sava Bankovic, a Serbian Orthodox priest who spent 20 years in prison for allegedly sympathizing with non-Communist partisans was arrested in June 1973 and served 4 years in prison for "hostile propaganda." Since his release from prison, he has been repeatedly harassed; local Communist officials initiated a campaign against his return to his parish, ignoring orders from church authorities that he be reinstated. In February of this year, Fr. Bankovic appealed to the president of Yugoslavia, outlining the official pressures to which he has been subjected and noting that police had twice searched his rooms, seizing his address book, newspaper clippings, and copies of a religious book he had published.

A delegation of Serbian Orthodox Church dignitaries recently visited the United States to discuss the problems of the church in Yugoslavia. They proposed that aid to Yugoslavia be tied to compliance with their requests for religious freedom. The Yugoslav press denounced their proposals as representing "an intervention of a foreign power, and open interference in the internal affairs of Yugoslavia."

The concluding document of the most recent Helsinki review conference, signed in September 1983 in Madrid, provides stronger language on religious rights than the original Helsinki accord, particularly with regard to the role of the individual in achieving the goals of the Helsinki process. Principle 10 states that:

"The participating States reaffirm that they will recognize, respect and *furthermore agree to take the action necessary* [emphasis added] to ensure the freedom of the individual to profess and practise, alone or in community with others, religion or belief acting in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience.

"In this context, they will consult, whenever necessary, the religious faiths, institutions and organizations, which act within the constitutional framework of their respective countries.

"They will favorably consider applications by religious communities of believers practising or prepared to practise their faith within the constitutional framework of their States, to be granted the status provided for in their respective countries for religious faiths, institutions and organizations."

The latter clause is aimed at gaining protection for communities that do not have official recognition, such as the Ukrainian Uniate church, or who resist state control and seek their own independent organizations.

Although the language in the recent concluding document is an improvement over what went before, some provisions are weakly formulated as a result of the need for consensus by all the 35 participating states, and some have escape clauses (such as "within the constitutional framework") which can be used by states to circumvent religious rights by making Helsinki commitments subject to domestic legislation.

It was partly in response to the stalemate produced by clashing Soviet and American interests at the Madrid conference that the U.S. Helsinki Watch helped to launch the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, whose headquarters is in Vienna, Austria. In September 1982, citizens from 18 countries that signed the Helsinki accords met in Bellagio, Italy to found the Federation. Participants included the established Helsinki committees in Canada, France, The Netherlands, Norway and the United States; later new Helsinki groups were formed in Germany, Austria, and Sweden. The Federation also maintains close ties to beleaguered Helsinki monitoring groups in Poland and Czechoslovakia to the now suspended Helsinki monitoring groups in the Soviet Union, and to citizens in other East European countries who monitor and promote compliance with international human rights agreements. The Federation affirms the Helsinki principle of the citizens right "to know and act upon his rights" and recognizes that citizens themselves must defend and extend their rights and monitor their governments' human rights performances; where this is not possible due to state repression of independent citizens' initiatives to monitor human rights, their colleagues in other countries must assist them in obtaining the right to monitor human rights and speak out about abuses in their countries when they are silenced.

The focus of the Federation is not on individual cases but on structural violations which affect large groups of people, and first and foremost, the right to monitor governmental compliance with international agreements, including restrictions of cultural and religious association, free expression, and the free flow of information and ideas. The IHF has sponsored human rights fact-finding missions to Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union, and publishes regular reports, frequently covered by the international media, on human rights issues, in the conviction that public attention is the best weapon to compel the abusers of rights to conform to international human rights standards.

The IHF and the U.S. Helsinki Watch Committee draw on a number of excellent sources in Europe that provide up-to-date, reliable information on religious persecution, including Keston College in England, Glaube in der 2 Welt (Faith in the Second World) in Switzerland, Cronid Lubarsky's U.S.S.R. News Briefs, published in Munich, West Germany, Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe reports. In the United States, Helsinki uses material provided by Pastor Georg Vins, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Christian Response International. All of these groups have good samizdat (unofficial publishing) sources within the countries of the Soviet bloc, including such independent human rights and religious publications as The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, Ellenpontok (Counterpoints) in Romania, Charter 77 and VONS (Committee to Defend the Unjustly Persecuted) communiques in Czechoslovakia, the Polish Helsinki Committee and underground Temporary Coordinating Commission of Solidarity in Poland, and the Committee to Aid Democratic Dissidents in Yugoslavia. It has been our experience that there is no lack of information on abuse of religious freedom in the East. What is needed is improvement in the mechanisms for raising religious persecution in governmental and non-governmental forums, and in publicizing it in the media.

Defense of persecuted religious activists in the East should not just be the domain of their co-religionists in the West, although certainly churches and religious organizations play a crucial role in supporting their fellow believers. International non-governmental human rights organizations, the U.S. Congress and European parliaments should all defend these rights. The same fundamental freedoms are at stake for religious groups as for any citizen groups in the Soviet bloc, and extension of the freedom of the churches forms a bulwark against state repression.

Given the current deadlock in Soviet-American relations and the increasing exploitation of human rights issues by some citizens groups and government officials as a means to wage a political battle in the cold war, Helsinki Watch has identified several avenues where advocacy of religious rights may be more successfully pursued:

(1) Co-religionists may successfully promote the rights of their fellow believers in that they may be viewed by repressive govenments as expressing genuine solidarity with members of their denominations in the East on religious rather than political grounds. Particularly effective are church organizations that are seen to have an even-handed approach to persecution of their co-religionists in any country of the world: for example, a group that supports Christians in Guatemala and the Philippines as well as in Poland and Czechoslovakia.

(2) Religious groups with ecumenical concerns with the religious rights of all, or groups with no particular affiliation, or non-religious human rights groups play an important role in religious rights advocacy in presenting the issue neutrally, in civil rights terms.

(3) European groups with even-handed human rights programs are in a good position now to raise violations with Soviet and East European officials, as they are removed from the arena of Soviet-American hostilities.

(4) The religious left and participants in the disarmament movement in Europe and North America could well have the most leverage now with East European officials and state-sponsored religious figures because the Soviet bloc is vitally interested in good relations with the Western peace movement. Eastern religious officials play a prominent part in disarmament conferences organized by their governments.

Helsinki watch has supplied information and briefings for a number of religious groups involved in the peace movement in Europe and the United States who have supported their counterparts in the independent peace movements in the East, many of whom are church members. Helsinki Watch has also called upon American religious leaders travelling to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to raise the issue of religious persecution and to visit members of religious groups not officially acknowledged by the government. While recognizing that it may be necessary to establish ties with the state-controlled religious bodies, in order to have some forum for dialogue, American religious activists should not accept such officials as their true counterparts and should be aware of the limitations placed upon them by their governments.

Some groups, particularly those that have spent many years building up contacts with East European church leaders under difficult conditions, fear that contact with dissenting religious activists or public discussion of religious persecution may disrupt contacts and destroy opportunities for "quiet diplomacy." However, our experience has shown that North American clergy and lay activists who have met with both official and non-official groups and who have forcefully raised human rights problems have not disrupted their exchange programs and in fact have ameliorated the conditions of victims of persecution. Western religious leaders can strengthen the hands of official religious figures in the East in their efforts to obtain concessions from their governments and a loosening of state restrictions on religious life. The impact of such religious rights advocacy is great enough in aiding persecuted individuals to warrant the occasional loss of an individual travel visa or even the rare expulsion from an East European country. Without this kind of support, believers in the East face lengthy prison sentences and harassment, particularly in provincial areas where there are no foreign correspondents or consulates.

It is important that radio stations funded by the United States identify and adequately serve equally all the religious populations of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union without religious or political bias, since these broadcasts are the single most important way in which the United States can sustain religious movements there.

The "free flow of information" works in two directions. Information disseminated by religious activists in Eastern Europe is smuggled out and rebroadcast into the country via the Western radio stations such as the BBC, VOA, RFE/RL. Such broadcasts are essential in providing information on human rights abuses to the general public in the East as well as religious literature and commentary not available in these countries. This is particularly important for small, scattered, religious communities that are not members of either official denominations or organized unofficial groups. With regard to the Soviet Union, Radio Liberty's Russian service has sufficient programming for Russian Orthodox believers, who make up a majority of the religious in the European part of the U.S.S.R., and also has some cultural programming for Soviet Jews. But there are currently no programs that serve the more than 5 million Protestants of the U.S.S.R. and the more than 4 million Catholics. The Protestant sects, which are extremely active in preaching the Bible, and in advocating human rights, are growing rapidly.

The independent or unofficial churches are the most persecuted in the U.S.S.R., and their adherents make up the overwhelming majority of those imprisoned for religious reasons—some 200 of the more than 1,000 known political prisoners in the Soviet Union are Baptists, for example. But Radio Liberty, although supported by the United States (a country with a strong Protestant tradition), offers the Protestants of the U.S.S.R. no programs of their own, nor does it accord any time on religious broadcasts to Protestant pastors or lay persons.

There are also more than 40 million persons of traditionally Moslem nationalities in the U.S.S.R. While Radio Liberty broadcasts programs in seven of the languages of those nationalities contain brief Koran readings (in Arabic, understood by practically no one in the Soviet Union) and occasional brief Islamic commentaries, there is nothing about Islam in broadcasts for speakers of other languages. Given the rising importance of domestic Islam in the U.S.S.R., it seems appropriate to devote at least some attention to the Islamic religion in Russian-language broadcasts.

The IHF is now soliciting testimony of religious persecution in preparation for a report to be released at the time of the October 1985 Cultural Forum in Budapest, Hungary. The 2-week forum, which will be attended by leading cultural figures as well as state representatives, is an outgrowth of the Madrid Helsinki review conference. The forum provides an opportunity to raise the issue of suppression of religious activity, particularly in regards to disseminating of religious literature; preservation of churches, religious monuments, and archives from state interference. Other follow-up conferences to review the human rights provisions of the Helsinki accord will take place in Ottawa, Canada for 6 weeks, commencing May 7, 1975 (human rights) and in Bern, Switzerland on human contacts, to begin on April 26, 1986 lasting 6 weeks. United States and West European non-governmental groups must use these opportunities to convey to the signatory countries of the Helsinki accord the appeals for observance of religious rights issued from the Soviet-bloc countries.

The IHF is also planning to mark the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, when a commemorative meeting will be held by the participating States in Helsinki, Finland.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Thank you very much, Ms. Fitzpatrick.

Dr. Boiter, we will have you as our anchor man now. We are pleased to have you with us.

STATEMENT OF DR. ALBERT BOITER, ADJUNCT FELLOW, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR STATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, FORMER DIRECTOR OF SOVIET RESEARCH, RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. BOITER. Mr. Chairman, I have a prepared statement but I also would like to preface my remarks with a word of tribute to the members of this committee and to other congressional committees for holding hearings and showing concern about the kind of information about religious liberty that for over 20 years has been coming in a steady stream of documentary material from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe as well as more recently from a large number of living witnesses.

After living in Europe for many years and returning not long ago to the United States, I was rather appalled to find that there are many small organizations active in this field, but nowhere does it all seem to come together and get scholarly research treatment as a total phenomenon. I think the hearings in the Helsinki Commission as well as other committees of the Congress do some of that; they help fill the gap. In any case, I can only applaud it and I feel privileged to be asked to participate in such a hearing.

In my prepared statement I have tried to describe as briefly as possible some of the major laws and legal mechanisms which the governments of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe use to ensure maximum party-state control over the life of churches as institutions and over the exercise of religious convictions by individuals.

The Soviet Union is the mother model of harsh official measures designed to eliminate religion from the life of society, sometimes by force, brutal force, but all times by calculated measures of both coercion and persuasion. It is also clear that the Soviet model over its 67 years has moved in the direction of more repression.

For one thing, the lengthy basic law prescribing the narrow limits for action of all religious associations that was enacted in 1929 at the height of atheist fanaticism is still valid today. It was even updated in 1975, just 10 days before Brezhnev went to Helsinki to sign the Helsinki agreement, with amendments, that make this 1929 law even more efficiently repressive. So I see no basis for optimism that the Soviet system in its present form could be evolving in the direction of religious toleration.

The East European Communist States do not replicate this Soviet model uniformly, despite a shared ideology. In fact, they exhibit considerable diversity among themselves in the juridical treatment of religion. And the explanation—there are several explanations, but the explanation that is perhaps most important—is that these regimes came into power only after World War II and that the Soviet occupation forces in the early postwar years allowed them to combat church and religion in their own ways as they deemed best in each case. As a result we see greatly varied patterns of church-state relations in their legal systems.

The chief characteristics of the Soviet legislation concerning state and law could be introduced in the following way. When a Soviet official is asked about any specific case of repression, such as the arrest or trial of a dissident clergyman or believer, the forced closing of a church against the will of its members, one invariable answer you get is that these people are lawbreakers and no state in the world allows people to break its laws and go unpunished.

This, of course, makes an impression on people from democratic societies. But if you then inquire about the nature and content of the applicable law, the reply is evasive, general and simplistic, because Soviet officials do not like the text of their most repressive laws to be known, either at home or abroad. Therefore one major aspect of the Soviet legal system is secret laws and legal dissimulation.

Another attribute of the system is that the laws fit together into a single fabric to support antireligious activism. The aim is to construct local church life in such a tight corset of legal requirements and supervision by a special state bureaucracy that real religious life becomes more or less impossible.

In my paper I describe the antireligous bureaucracy of the Soviet Union. When I turn to Eastern Europe I note that here the law is not the best way of understanding the church-state relationship in each of these seven countries. There are special historical, philosophical, and other factors to be taken into account.

I do compare them with the Soviet model, however, and differentiate between them in the following way: Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia are closest at the present time to the Soviet model, East Germany and Yugoslavia are at the other end of the scale, while Poland, Hungary and Romania fall somewhere in between.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
[Mr. Boiter's prepared statement follows:]

Prepared Statement of Dr. Albert Boiter

I wish in my prepared statement, Mr. Chairman, to describe some of the major laws and legal mechanisms used by the Marxist-Leninist governments of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to insure maximum party-state control over the life of churches as institutions and over the exercise of religious convictions by individuals in their daily life and in the moral upbringing of children. Legally speaking, the Soviet Union provides the "mother model" of harsh official measures designed to eliminate religion from the life of society, sometimes by brutal force and at all times by continuous measures of both coercion and persuasion.

It is also clear that this Soviet model over 67 years has moved steadily, despite a certain relaxation during and immediately after World War II, in a more repressive direction. For one thing the lengthy basic Soviet law prescribing the narrow limits of action for all "religious associations" (as churches are called) that was enacted in 1929 at the height of atheist fanaticism is still valid today as the guiding legislative vehicle. This anti-religious law was even updated with amendments in 1975 (just 10 days before Brezhnev met world leaders to sign the historic Helsinki Agreement) to make the 1929 law even more efficiently repressive. There is no basis whatsoever, therefore, for optimism that the Soviet system in its present form will evovle in the direction of benign religious toleration.

The East European Communist States have not replicated uniformly the laws on religion of the Soviet model, despite a shared ideology. In fact, these states exhibit diversity in their juridical treatment of religion and in their policies toward church leaders. The explanation lies to some extent in the fact that Communist regimes came to power in these states only after World War II, and that the Soviet occupation forces of the early postwar period actually permitted them to combat the church and religion in ways they deemed best in each case, thus producing differentiated approaches reflecting the varied religious backgrounds and traditions of church-state relations peculiar to each of these national entities. Before going further, however, I must mention a more fundamental point.

No one should have no illusion that laws on religion are the cause or source of official infringement of religious liberty. Law in Communist systems is always a subordinate category, a mere tool to achieve specific social, political, or ideological goals. Lenin himself best described the role of laws in the Communist system in a speech to university students shortly after the 1917 revolution. He said: "Soviet power is an unlimited power. It is not bound by any laws whatsoever, not even its own." This utter contempt for any notion of rule-of-law curbs on Communist rulers or administrators is still a basic premise of the sytem. Although Soviet Governments over the decades have enacted several million laws (perhaps more than any state in history). Soviet officials still often ignore or even violate the law when an overriding state purpose has priority. This fact is especially clear in the case of current Soviet anti-religious policy. The excessive legalism displayed by Soviet institutions in regard to legal form, procedure, and other technicalities is a case of massive self-delusion, a kind of Potemkin village facade behind which the landscape is largely empty and barren of genuine legality. One may well ask, then, why any Westerner should spend time studying the laws on religion, of which there are several hundred. My answer is that one finds in these laws the real anti-religious strategy of the regime laid out in comprehensive detail.

What then are the chief characteristics of the Soviet legislation concerning church and religion? Let me introduce my answer in the following way. When a Soviet official is asked about any specific case of repression—such as the arrest of a dissident clergyman or believer, the forced closing of a church against the will of its members, etc.—one invariable explanation is that the victims broke the law and no state in the world allows people who are lawbreakers to go unpunished. This response naturally makes an impression on anyone raised in a democratic society. (Surely a Soviet citizen can find a way to practice his religious faith without breaking the law of the land!) But if one inquires into the nature and content of the applicable law, the reply is evasive, general, and simplistic. For Soviet officials don't like the details of their laws on religion widely known, either abroad or at home, so the vast majority are "secret laws," that is the texts are never published for public consumption. Secrecy and legal dissimulation, then, are two pervasive attributes of the model.

Another is that the Soviet laws on religion are designed to serve as a single fabric of anti-religious activism. The aim is to constrict local church life in such a tight corset of legal requirements and direct state supervision by a special state bureaucracy that real religious life (aside from rituals and worship within the four walls of a church) is more or less impossible. This legal framework is intentionally confrontational, almost defying any citizen to practice his faith in any conspicuous way without incurring some perfectly legal penalty. Believers run some risk even when they observe the most common of church traditions: baptism of infants, church weddings or funerals, taking their children to church, receiving a priest or pastor in one's home for any reason whatsoever, talking about God to a fellow-employee at work or to a fellow prisoner in the labor camps, etc. The goal, of course, is to close down all churches and rid Soviet society of religious belief completely—not at some remote time in the future, aided by worldwide trends toward secularism, but in the present generation if possible.

(Incidentally, churches are not "closed down" or "liquidated" in the current terminology; they merely "cease to function"—and even official reports say this happens in more than 100 cases each year. I don't know what distinction the new euphemism tries to make, if any; I suspect it is the same kind made to explain Soviet withdrawal from the Olympics in Los Angeles: Moscow is not "boycotting" the 1984 Summer Games, it simply decided not to participate.)

The state bureaucracy on religion to which I referred is a highly centralized organ of government called the Council of Religious Affairs headquartered in Moscow. It is attached officially to the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers and wields authority under that lofty aegis. But in actual operation it functions as a department of the KGB's Fifth Directorate. For administrative purposes this council has commissioners assigned to all regions of the country who are solely responsible for all questions concerning church and religion in their area. It is this official to whom churches must apply for permission to exist (so-called "registration"). He can cancel such registration without citing any reason and the law provides no right of appeal or judicial remedy. He also wields absolute veto power over the selection and appointment of clergymen to any church position and can dismiss any one of them, again without explanation or right to appeal, by revoking the special license by previously issued when approving the given appointment.

The lower level of the official anti-religious network is formed by the local Soviets (rural and urban) in which nominal ownership of all church property on their territory in vested. Registered church bodies obtain custody of a state-owned church building on the basis of a detailed contract signed with the local Soviet that covers not only property and other economic obligations but also repeats (or even adds to) the limitations on the group's religious activities. Failure to adhere to any of the provisions can be grounds for abrogating the contract and loss of the building.

Soviet law at present does not empower a local Soviet to dissolve a religious association or take away its building, although it may recommend such action. This decision is the exclusive prerogative of the Religious Affairs Commissioner in Moscow. Thus, the once frequently heard excuse that occasional of religious persecution and extralegal actions that do occur are due only to the "excessive zeal" of local officials has no validity today, if indeed, it ever did. Today every act of religious repression stems from decisions made at the highest level of government in Moscow.

Legally, a local church cannot own anything because it does not have the right of juridical person. Everything it acquires for its use, even religious articles, automatically becomes state property and is entered on the inventory of items returnable to the government.

The final cog in the Soviet state's anti-religious system is a quasi-official neighborhood committee created by each local Soviet from it own membership and volunteer atheist citizens that possesses little legal power but is given a somewhat unlimited mandate for action. It has the rather pompous title of "Public Commission for Control over Observance of the Laws about Religious Cults." As the name implies it is a local snooper group, a kind of atheist vigilante, to catch families, clergymen, youth groups, or whole parishes violating any of the legal restrictions on religious life. It's members sometimes even go to church, to find out who is attending the services, what the sermon is about, and other suspicious behavior.

The last feature of the Soviet model that I must mention is found most clearly in criminal law. Everyone knows the Soviet Union denies it has prisoners of conscience or ever did have. Imprisoned believers are just ordinary criminals, although their so-called "criminal" acts are covered only by secret laws. However, the criminal code is published widely, so that here we encounter another legal device: the ambiguous catch-all definition of a crime.

The Soviet codes define "religious" crime in a vague, neat formula: "violation of the legislation on separation of church and state." In practice not many people are indicted under this paragraph, but are charged instead with other similar imprecisely-worded catch-all crimes: such as slander of the Soviet system, anti-state propaganda, resisting authority, hooliganism, theft, other economic crimes, disturbing the peace, or even morals charges. But this is not really important because the whole proceeding against a religious dissident—charge, cited evidence, trial, and sentence—has little to do with genuine administration of justice. These are just parts of the script of a theatrical production, carefully designed to have maximum intimidating effect on all citizens who let their minds contemplate, in Lenin's words, "the vulgar idea of God."

Since Soviet anti-religious laws are too all-embracing to enforce strictly and efficiently in every single case, what happens is that the authorities will tolerate a great deal of violation so long as an individual is deemed relatively harmless, without much influence on others. Arrest signifies that the KGB's patience ran out, that its toleration of the technically illegal acts is no longer justifiable in Moscow, and that a decision has been reached to remove the culprit from his accustomed place by sending him to prison, a forced labor colony, or into exile. Since the individual's fate is sealed in advance by this prior judgment, the whole judicial action against him becomes an inevitable parody of justice.

This is an appropriate theme on which to start contrast of church-state relations in other Communist States with the dogmatic, uncompromising, and unsophisticated Soviet model. As already noted, religious policy and church-state relations differ markedly in the countries we now call Eastern Europe but which belong historically, and more meaningfully, to what we once called Central Europe. Most of these countries have more in common with the West than the East in terms of legal, political, and religious tradition—a historical reality whose significance has not weakened, and possibly has been greatly enhanced, by the Communist takeover of power.

If asked to single out just one major contrast in anti-religious systems in these states as a whole with the Soviet model, I would offer the following generalization: In contrast to the Soviet Union, most East European regimes no longer assume that a religious person is inherently disloyal to the Communist State or an enemy of the system. (This is, in fact, the message that hundreds of Soviet believers emphasize in their final statements at trials, but to which Soviet officials so far have been stubbornly deaf: "I love my country; I am loyal to the Soviet state and its economic system and am willing to defend it against its enemies. But above all I love God and will obey Him rather than men on matters relating to my spiritual life.") In comparison to the Soviet model, religious policy in the East European states' might be classified in the following manner.

Bulgaria (an Orthodox land) and Czechoslovakia (mainly Catholic but with large and ancient Protestant minority churches) come closest to the Soviet model. Both regimes are tough, ideologically dogmatic, and occasionally brutal in combatting religion.

At the other end of the scale are East Germany, the only predominantly Protestant or Evangelical (meaning Lutheran and Reformed or Presbyterian) Communist country, and Yugoslavia (mainly Catholic in Croatia, Dalmatia, and Carinthia, and Orthodox in Serbia). The remarkable fact about these two regimes is that they have abandoned state sponsorship of atheist propaganda to the general population and have entered into quasi-concordat relationship with the main churches. Yugoslav Communists justify this development on grounds that atheism was a 19th-century movement that became attached accidentally to the Marxist movement but has no relevance to building a socialist system today. The East Germans, somewhat less defiant of Moscow dogmatists, argue that Lenin's atheism was shaped by his hatred specifically of the Russian Orthodox Church and Tsarism, and that it therefore has no relevance to the religious history of Germany.

Poland, Hungary, and Rumania fall somewhere between the two extremes. Since all three are heavily Catholic, the condition of church-state relations depends to some degree on the nature of state-to-state relations with the Vatican at any stage. In general, Catholics and Communists regimes have been locked in stalemated confrontation for 40 years, with occasional motion toward more normal interaction but no real breakthroughs. Vatican diplomatic action in the area fluctuates, but whether active or passive it always proceeds, quite properly, with caution and mostly in behind-the-scenes contacts. Only specialists in this field have knowledge of what is going on at any given time and the non-specialists, of which I am one, find it prudent to avoid generalization or commenting at all on situations about which they do not and cannot know the whole story. I will here only venture to pass along a conclusion reached by some specialists I respect. They find that Vatican policy toward Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union is imbued with new vigor under Pope Paul II and that it operates on the basis of a list of priorities ranked pragmatically in terms of feasible results. They think that the situations in Czechoslovakia and Poland rank high, Lithuania in the middle, and the Ukraine at the bottom on this list of working priorities.

As for legal aspects of church-state relations in these seven states, time does not allow even a short survey. And, in any case, an adequate picture cannot be given of any of these states in a few words. Moreover, the law and organizational features do not in themselves give the whole picture as clearly as in the Soviet case; one can understand fully the laws and institutional arrangements only by going into a lot of history, unique national traditions, and even some theology. Let me simply allude in passing to East Germany as by far the most interesting, if only because of the vast written record covering evey nuance of matters in the dispute for more than 35 years.

To conclude, Mr. Chairman, I think a summary is unnecessary since the selected facts I have mentioned are themselves a summation of a much bigger reality. I also have no recommendations to make, aside from the hope that a larger number of Americans get to know and understand the significance of these facts and that policymakers also will take them into account whenever appropriate in U.S. official dealings with these countries. What I do wish to say in conclusion is something of which I am profoundly convinced.

Solzhenitsyn has written that the epicenter, the moving force within the Soviet Communism is hatred of God. I agree but I recognize that in a secular age the meaning of this crucial insight will not be fully understood by most people. Let me state the same basic idea somewhat differently in the language of social and political philosophy: The Soviet war against churches and religious belief is essentially a throwback to an earlier stage of civilization in which the fires of religious intolerance dominated public life and shaped political institutions.

The seminal ideas on democracy arose in, and largely in response to, these conditions. But democracy could not come into blossom as a system until the barriers of intolerance had been overcome. This is what John Stuart Mill had in mind, I think, when he said that religious liberty is the mother of all liberties. Democracy today is still a tender flower, with barely 200 years experience in mankind's slow advance from barbarism and not yet in bloom for a majority of people of the globe. Communism's invitation to return to new categories of divisive prejudice, hatred, and intolerance—which are not different in kind from those of the past—can never be made compatible the foward pull of the ideals of pluralistic societies in which differences between human beings, especially in the realms of conscience and ideas, are tolerated, encouraged, and protected as a basic human right under the rule of law.

Religious repression under communism is more than a series of scattered incidents. It epitomizes a serious historical challenge to the still revolutionary notion that democratic systems based on tolerance can flourish and survive despite the many perverse impulses within man himself. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The **Chairman**. Thank you very much.

I would like to announce that on the podium with us here is Anita Bedelis of the Joint Baltic-American Committee, and with her three summer interns: Henna Parks of Estonia; Zaiga Robins, who is of Latvian descent; and Algis Silas of Lithuania, from Chicago, IL. We are delighted to have them with us today.

In response to international pressure regarding violations of human rights, Soviet officials typically dig in their heels and claim that such interference constitutes interference in their internal affairs. Is the structure of international law so fragile that invocation of national sovereignty can always undermine progress in the promotion of human rights in general and religious freedom in particular?

Mr. **Boiter**. There is nothing fragile about the structure of international law in the field of human rights or religious liberties. Every significant facet is covered in a variety of international agreements, U.N. covenants, regional human rights pacts, and other legal instruments. All of these were adopted after lengthy and intensive negotiations on the texts and then ratified by the vast majority of sovereign states, including the Soviet Union. The Helsinki accords of 1975, for example, took more than 10 years to finalize. The problem lies in implementation, which depends almost entirely upon voluntary compliance of each government with the lawful pledges it has signed.

What makes this fabric of law so ineffective and inapplicable with regard to the Soviet Union is a self-serving Soviet attitude they have to right to interpret the specific provisions of international laws any way they see fit concerning every internal or domestic matter. By this means the Soviet Government can turn away all charges of a violation. They simply make their own interpretation and say: Take it or leave it. There is not enforcement machinery, and one may be sure that the Soviet Government would never agree to the creation of any.

Soviet contempt for international law as a set of general principles evolved over time is even more blatant than its rejection of the notion that behind written domestic laws there exists a broader commitment to legality. Some Soviet lawyers in the early 1960's tried to argue that the letter and the spirit of law are different concepts, but they were silenced by the Stalinist dogma, which still prevails today, that the spirit of a law is found in the letter of the law and nowhere else. Soviet law schools teach that international law is treaty law, nothing more. Treaties can, of course, be amended, renounced, or even unilaterally abrogated. For them the structure is indeed fragile and tentative.

Soviet diplomats spend a lot of time, on the other hand, negotiating and formulating international treaties. They understand the value of this as a means of binding the hands of democratic officials who do not lightly break either the letter or the spirit of legal obligations. It makes their behavior more predictable. But Soviet treaty negotiators at the same time work hard to get escape clauses into the text that make its terms less binding on Moscow, because ideology comes into play.

For example, the ban on interference in the internal affairs of other states, a legitimate rule of international law, is included in most covenants on human rights that the Soviet Government has signed and ratified. And they use it in such a way as to negate or preclude the effect of the other provisions. The Helsinki followup conferences at Belgrade and Madrid have demonstrated this amply.

On religious freedom, Soviet negotiators are especially cunning. For example, in the recent U.N. Covenant on Religious Liberties, which also took more than 10 years of negotiations, the Soviet representatives insisted upon and got still another verbal loophole: the technical definition of freedom of conscience. The Soviets see in this covenant a definition similar to that in their own Constitution: guaranteed freedom of conscience for all citizens, but with practical expression of that freedom confined for religious citizens to worship and rituals or unlimited propagation of atheism. This little word "or" is literally deemed to give each state a choice between religion or atheism and thereby legitimizes the Soviet Union's anti-religious preference. The recent U.N. covenant, and all its details, can be simply shrugged off by Soviet officials as irrelevant to Soviet policy and practice. This also explains the impotence of international organizations to do anything or even to put well-known Soviet violations on their agenda.

The CHAIRMAN. News reports from December of last year state that the Soviet Government has adopted a new law that gives penal authorities the right to extend prison or labor camp terms for an infringement of penal regulations. Is this law enforced? Has it been applied to individuals imprisoned for religious reasons?

Mr. BOITER. The new law went into effect on October 1 last year, so it is too early to know exactly how strictly and widely it is being applied. But it clearly is directed mainly against prisoners of conscience who refuse even in confinement to renounce their moral principles.

The law in question is a new paragraph added to the criminal code of the RSFSR, actually to the article covering the crime of escape. The new crime is defined as malicious disobedience, not of the penal regulations, but rather of any lawful demand made by administrators of a penal institution. It will cover such offenses as hunger strikes, signing protest petitions, writing letters with forbidden content—such as quotations from the Bible—and similar behavior.

What it signifies, of course, is that the panel camps are one of the few places in the Soviet Union where freedom of speech is openly exercised by prisoners of conscience—and that includes all religious prisoners whatever the formal charge--and that the internal punitive measures, such as confinement for long periods in isolation cells, reduced rations, or suspension of mail and visitor privileges, do not sufficiently intimidate prisoners of conscience. Thus, one alternative is to keep them locked away from society as long as possible.

The general idea is not completely new. There have been a number of cases in recent years where prisoners the authorities did not want released when their sentences expired were again put on trial on new charges in the location of their penal institution. One recalls such a trial of a Crimean Tatar in Siberia that Sakharov unsuccessfully tried to attend. There also was the case of a man imprisoned for compiling a large book with documented cases of the abuse of psychiatry for political purposes. They did not want him free to continue his detailed research on that question, or perhaps they feared he had collected fresh data from contact with his fellow prisoners.

But these new trials involved bothersome technicalities, such as finding fellow prisoners willing to testify that an alleged new crime was committed in the penal institution. So the new law dispenses with the problem; the only evidence now required will be that supplied by the labor camp or prison director. He in effect is made the accuser, judge, and jury. One may be sure that the new law will be used frequently, not just as an exception, but as a standing part of the highly arbitrary penal system.

The CHAIRMAN. I would ask both of you, if you could, to comment on the questioin of the Helsinki Final Act. In September of last year, the United States and other governments did sign the Helsinki Final Act and became signatories of the concluding document of the Madrid review meeting.

How do you view the concluding document? Does it strengthen the hand of those in the West who want to press the Soviets and the governments of Eastern Europe for progress on religious rights?

Ms. **Fitzpatrick**. Senator Percy, as I commented in my written testimony, Helsinki Watch felt that the new concluding document has much stronger language in a number of areas, particularly with regard to religious rights. It actually spells out that the participating states take action on ensuring and implementing these rights.

However, there are some weak formulations in the clauses. One of the disappointing things to our committee was that the Helsinki process, during the interim period before the next conference, is split into three areas, trade, human rights, and disarmament.

There is a disarmament conference going on now in Stockholm, and then in October 1985 there will be a cultural conference; and then subsequent to that there will be a human rights conference, which by the way is one of the shortest of the conferences.

This is unfortunate, I think, for the peoples of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, since it lessens the number of forums which Western leaders have to put pressure on the Soviet and East European leaders.

The **Chairman**. What is the current status of the Helsinki Monitoring Group in the Soviet Union? Are there people to replace those who have been arrested or imprisoned or exiled?

Ms. **Fitzpatrick**. Yes; there are people who have taken the place of, say, the members of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, most of whom are in prisons, labor camps or exile now. As you know, the Moscow Helsinki Watch was forced to disband in 1982, and the other Helsinki Watch Groups around the Soviet Union have also had to greatly curtail their activities or are virtually defunct, such as the Lithuanian Helsinki Group.

The people who have come to take their place do not always choose to publicize their names, so we do not know all of them. And in fact, the second wave of people who took the place of the original monitors have now themselves been arrested, and there is now yet a third wave of people who have taken their place.

It is sort of like a Hydra; one head is cut off and more heads grow. And I think that as long as there are human rights abuses in these countries there will always be citizens that will take the risk to speak out about them and to pass information about them to the West. The fact that we are still getting information from these countries indicates that people are willing to take this risk.

Mr. **Boiter**. May I comment on that also, Senator Percy?

The **Chairman**. Please do.

Mr. **Boiter**. I would like to stress what has been said about the Moscow Helsinki Monitoring Group not disbanding because of lack of new people willing to join and continue the work, despite the obvious personal risks involved. When the last two members of the Moscow Group not yet imprisoned—one of whom is the wife of Academician Sakharov, Yelena Bonner—announced the disbandment to foreign correspondents in Moscow last year, they made it clear that the real reason was the stepped-up police harassment inaugurated by Andropov that made any further work impossible. One of the questions that legal specialists in this field and in the Moscow Helsinki Monitoring Group mention repeatedly is the exact wording of international documents, not only the Helsinki agreement but various U.N. covenants. And the conclusion that one reaches is a total indifference on the part of the Soviet Union to these text of these documents and specifically with regard to the Helsinki accords.

For example, I mentioned that the amendments to the 1929 law on religion were adopted just 10 days before Helsinki. It was not published until October, but when the date of adoption was just 10 days before Helsinki.

Peter Reddaway and others with whom I have discussed this believe that the timing was a deliberate demonstration that said we are signing the agreement, but under our laws this is our system, no matter what the Helsinki text says. Likewise, therefore, when they went to the Belgrade or Madrid talks, the Soviet side could adopt the attitude that it does not matter what we signed in terms of language or what phrases were used; our system is what it is and it does not violate the Helsinki document.

The CHAIRMAN. What is the situation for Moslems in the Soviet Union? How do they react to Iran and the Soviet presence in Afghanistan? How do the Soviet authorities perceive the Moslems, and how concerned is the Soviet Government about the rapidly growing Islamic population?

Mr. BOITER. This is a field in which I have only a generalist's rather than a specialist's competence. But the questions you mention are timely and important and all Soviet area specialists have had to scurry in the last 5 years to deepen and update their knowledge about the 50 million Muslims of the Soviet Union as a result of the rise to power of Islamic fundamentalism in Iran. That and the invasion of Afghanistan were unpredictable historic events with vast implications that will be studied carefully for years.

One point of consensus among the experts is that Islamic fundamentalism is not likely to spread among Soviet Muslims. There are many reasons but the main ones are that most Soviet Muslims are Sunni rather than Shi'ite and that in general they have a positive attitude toward modernism and the benefits of moderization. There is no evidence of consequence so far to dispute that view.

On the other hand, there is also general consensus that decades of Soviet rule have not basically weakened traditional Islamic culture or loyalties among Soviet Muslims, including even those who join the Communist Party and rise to positions of authority. Nor has decades of isolation greatly altered their identification with the big Islamic world to the south in Asia and Africa of which they are a part.

The Soviet Government's view of all this is full of ambiguity. They obviously were delighted at the fall of the Shah and seemed, at least initially, to relish the geopolitical destabilization that made the invasion of Afghanistan seem like a good idea. But later they had second thoughts and today seem as perplexed as everyone else.

Soviet Muslims probably know a great deal more about developments in Iran and Afghanistan than the Soviet media tell them, but this a fuzzy area on which few hard facts are known. The Soviet Government does attack Khomeni's fundamentalism occasionally, but strangely reports often on the alleged pro-Soviet support of Muslim officials in Afghanistan. According to some reports, Soviet Muslims are not used for military duty in great numbers in Afghanistan; apparently Moscow wants to take no chances. Let me add that Soviet publications constantly reveal official concern about many problems posed by the Islamic people of Soviet Central Asia, and a sharp awareness that the problems are growing rather than fading. This includes not only the rapid population growth, but also the rising level of educational sophistication and self-assertiveness toward Russian officials in the area.

As for Soviet anti-religious policy, the same laws apply to Muslims as to all others, but they simply don't work against a religion like Islam. Closing mosques and arresting energetic mullahs has little impact on a way of life religion that is perpetuated mainly by what mothers teach their offspring beginning with the cradle. There are some special local laws for Muslims, such as ones that try to outlaw pilgrimages to holy places, but these are hard to enforce. It is not a matter of more toleration. Moscow simply has not discovered a winning strategy for combating Islamic identity.

The CHAIRMAN. Despite nominal guarantees of the right of freedom of religion in the constitutions of the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc, a myriad of legal restrictions in these countries impinge on this right. Do any of these countries have a legal system which has the potential to provide a framework for the protection of religious freedom for any of its residents?

Mr. BOITER. The legal systems are very different, reflecting different national histories and traditions. Senator Dodd was saying, for example, that in what we call Eastern Europe, but actually is Central Europe more properly called, most of these countries are really more closely associated historically, legally, and religiously with the West than with the East.

Consequently, in the present situation, what has been happening for 40 years is that the Soviet Union keeps pressuring these countries to import or to imitate the Soviet legal system on matters of church and religion, to adopt similar laws, and this pressure has been resisted.

Let me take the case of East Germany as an example. East Germany has gone through three complete changes in church-state relations. There was the attempt from 1951 up until the Berlin Wall, a period of 10 years, to try to put German churches under the same situation as in the Soviet model.

And then came the Berlin Wall in 1961 and the situation cooled down a bit. As the German Democratic Republic began to receive some recognition as a sovereign state—that is through the sixties—and at a time when the bishops of East Germany could no longer physically attend the All-German Evangelical Conference, there was a kind of standstill relationship.

Then in 1969, the church itself gave in to the demand that they withdraw from the All-German Conference, that they create a new church conference based on the territorial lines of the GDR. And suddenly, in 1978—it was, of course, building all this time—there was a face-to-face meeting between the head of the party and the bishops, in which the party gave in and granted the church almost everything that it wanted. It turned the situation almost back to the beginning. The first constitution of East Germany in 1949 had actually repeated everything that was in the Weimar constitution—a long thing, taking up a whole chapter. And that is why in the 1950's the church and the bishops were constantly saying to state leaders, you are violating your own constitution.

The **Chairman**. With the celebration of the 500th birthday of Martin Luther last year, some note a new accommodation between church and state which has allowed for greater religious freedom for the Lutherans of East Germany. Can you comment on any recent changes in the relationship between the church and state in East Germany? What accounts for these changes? What is your prognosis for the future of church-state relations there?

Mr. **Boiter**. I deal with some of these questions in my prepared statement and I also state there that the church-state relationship in East Germany since 1978 seems to me about as close to normal as one can expect in any Communist system. But I would enter two major caveats. The first is that East Germany, for many reasons, must be considered a special case and one should not draw conclusions too easily about the possibility of a similar evolution in other Communist States. The second is that the quasi-concordat signed by the East German regime with the bishops of the Federation (Bund) of German Evangelical Churches did not solve all problems that can arise and, in fact, by recognizing greater autonomy for church institutions plus the long-standing right of church leaders to express without censorship their own view on any public policy issue affecting the life of the people, the 1978 agreement virtually assures there will be disagreement and tension in the church-state relationship. That clearly has been the case on many issues in the last 6 years and is today. So the prognosis has to be that perfect harmony will never exist, so long as the church remains truly a church and the government remains Communist.

The main special feature of the East German state is that it has no prior history of statehood, being formed entirely on a territory that was more or less incidentally assigned as a postwar Soviet military occupation zone. Thus the problem of legitimacy has always been uppermost. And legitimacy had to be established not only with its own population but also with the rest of the German nation to the west. This factor was paramount in the church-state relationship until the bishops finally pledged their loyalty to socialist state—but not its ideology—in 1969. The government waited until 1978 to decide that the pledge was genuine and then entered into a kind of mutually agreed working relationship with the church on many questions. In brief, that is how it came about. This is still not full religious freedom on the German historical model, but it is quite remarkable.

The Luther Year of 1983 was not an example of better church-state relations. It was, if anything, a good demonstration of the inevitable disagreement and tension that I mentioned. When the bishops obtained permission in 1978 to commemorate Luther in 1983 they planned a series of purely religious festivals and formed a church commission to prepare them. Somewhat later, the government formed its own Luther committee headed by party chief Honecker and all its events were to celebrate Luther as a great German figure, even a putative revolutionary, and no religious ceremonies were included in these events. That is precisely what happened in 1983: two separate sets, not joint celebrations.

The reason why the East German Communists decided to celebrate Luther's birthday is quite obvious and very interesting. One might call it a new phase in the old quest for legitimacy. Since 1978 the East Germans have been engaged in resurrecting many famous Germans and claiming them as really progenitors of their system. They call it the search for historical roots and typically the claim that only in East Germany, not in West Germany, are these great geniuses properly understood and appreciated. The pantheon includes Frederick the Great, Clausewitz, Heine, Wagner, Beethoven, Einstein, and many others. Why not begin with Martin Luther? It might confuse a lot of people but it got a lot of publicity, which was the real purpose. What they hope to achieve is not all that clear, but it keeps a lot of propagandists busy.

The **Chairman**. What has been the effect of peace activism and other political movements within the East German religious community? How far do you think the East German Government will allow religious leaders to go in opposing government policy?

Mr. **Boiter**. I detect some false assumptions in the question but a very general reply may put them in perspective. Spontaneous, genuinely spontaneous, youth peace movements appeared in several Communist States last year. They may have been stimulated by the lavish and exaggerated Communist media reporting on Western peace movements, both the genuine and the bogus, Soviet-sponsored kind. In any event, a problem is posed in trying to analyze these movements in any broader context by their somewhat amorphous nature, except for a few newsworthy events, and the fact that they seem to drop out of sight rather quickly.

What is really noteworthy is that the East German youth movement seemed to evoke some sympathy from the church and the state, but nothing like all-out support by either. This underscores a factual reality, namely that Moscow demands a monopoly on "peace" issues and on any other policy aspect of East-West relations. No one in a responsible position in any Communist State dares to challenge this monopoly because the retribution would be massive and swift. So the East German Government had no choice but to arrest some ringleaders of the youth movement, whereas the church could do little more than protest the arrests in subdued fashion without championing their activity. In present circumstances an independent peace movement in any East European state or the Soviet Union has the same prospects as the proverbial snowball in hell.

There is a broader and legitimate peace movement in East Germany which is encouraged and supported by the church, and I presume that part of your question refers to it. But the issue is one of semantic subtleties. This peace movement stresses a slogan that calls for an absolute ban on the possession and deployment of all weapons of mass destruction. That reflects an official position adopted by the church. But the same emphasis characterizes the peace work of many groups and individuals in the West that are approved, or at least tolerated, by Moscow. It is a fine line, but not easy for Communist officials to forbid without being ridiculous. The maximalist slogan merely echoes one of Moscow's own peace proposals and foreign policy initiatives. I think it may take some time for the regime to figure how to combat this church movement.

The only relatively independent peace organization in a Communist State with tacit Soviet approval was the Christian Peace Conference of Prague in the 1960's, but it was deliberatley destroyed at the time of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Since then all Soviet-sponsored peace conferences for religious leaders have emanated from Moscow, formally upon invitation of the patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, but in reality initiated and guided by the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs and various elements of the peace network bureaucracy. Whatever others may understand by the word peace, Moscow's only acceptable definition is one that equates peace with 100 percent support for every single facet of Soviet foreign policy and the changing emphasis in Soviet peace propaganda strategy. I think that is all the light I have to shed on this soap-bubble topic.

The CHAIRMAN. Whan I was in China I was recording with my motion picture and sound camera, and a number of times the Chinese were insisting that there was no law prohibiting religious practice, but also everyone has the right not to practice religion.

Is there such a thing as a religious crime in the Soviet Union? If not, what are the specific kinds of charges brought against religious believers?

Mr. BOITER. I cover that in my paper and I am sorry I did not have a chance to get to it in oral remarks. The religious crime is a single article in the criminal code. Religion is mentioned in three articles of the code, but there is only one important one of a general nature.

Religious crime is defined in this article in a very neat, short formula: violations of the legislation on separation of church and state. That is all. It does not go into details. There have been some instructions from the supreme court over the years in explanation, which have some force perhaps in a trial, but they are minor details. They do not change the essential vagueness of what the crime is.

In other words, this is another major characteristic of the system, the use of an ambiguous catch-all phrase to define a crime, and this is the catch-all formula in the case of religious crime.

And so what you have to do is to describe this whole fabric, the whole network of hundreds of laws. It is a hierarchy of laws, not all, of course, by the legislature: administrative laws, local legislation, ministerial decrees, et cetera. and they cover in detail everything that touches upon a church. In fact, there is an ironic saying among the Soviet people themselves that anything not permitted by law is forbidden.

So the crime is not a matter of legal definition. What happens in practice, because they cannot possibly enforce all of these laws strictly and consistently, is that they will allow a certain degree of violations, so long as a person seems to be rather harmless and does not have a great deal of influence on others. But there comes a certain point at which a decision is reached that a religious individual has gone too far and they now have to make him an example or warning to others and get rid of him by sending him off to a labor camp.

That prior decision is then the one, as I point out in my paper, that makes the whole ensuing trial, the evidence, the sentencing, and so on, really a travesty on the administration of justice.

The CHAIRMAN. How can the United States be most effective in promoting unlimited religious freedom in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe? Do you distinguish between the roles that Congress and the Executive should play inthe process?

Mr. BOITER. We are talking now about influencing the behavior of foreign states, or how to bring the force of Western opinion to bear on Soviet policy. No one has any certain answers as to what works or what does not. The Soviet reaction to Western opinion and protest has been unpredictable over the years. One dissident is sentenced to a long term whereas another guilty of the same behavior is forced to emigrate. One church threatened with closing remains open whereas others are closed despite publicity abroad. If there is an inner logic to this contradictory pattern, no one has ever figured it out. Under Brezhnev, we called it selective terrorism and let it go at that. Perhaps what we meant is the Soviet system is inherently arbitrary and unpredictable.

From the point of view of what action can be initiated abroad, I think of it on two main levels: governmental and involved citizens, whether individuals or groups. The late Leonard Schapiro said some years ago that Western private protest had little impact on the Soviet leaders, but when Soviet dissenters draw the attention of Westen politicians, when this knowledge begins to impinge on Soviet dealings with foreign governments, Soviet policy might be affected. He said this in 1972 when détente was beginning, well before the Helsinki accords, and before most human rights movements had blossomed. He was right insofar as the last years of Brezhnev were concerned, though even then the pattern of selective terror I mentioned made prediction impossible.

Under Andropov, and now under Chernenko, a visibly sharp crackdown on all dissent has occurred and a deaf ear is turned to all Western protest, even governmental. This may be only an interlude, a product of the leadership transition now underway. But it is probably futile to offer long-term advice in what could be a short-term phase, or vice versa. I will make only a few general observations.

First, it is surely proper and right for the U.S. Congress to speak out in any way and as often as it sees fit on matters of religious freedom in the U.S.S.R. and in Eastern Europe. As the highest representation of the grassroots opinion of American citizens, as well as exercising its legal prerogatives under international agreements binding on all signatories, the Congress is merely carrying out a political and moral duty.

Second, I can affirm from having read thousands of "samizdat" documents from Soviet Christians over the last 20 years that they do not ask much of us in the West. In fact, they don't really ask us for anything, but seem to assume that they will get two things from fellow believers abroad merely by giving firsthand information aobut their situations. The two things are prayer and publicity. They genuinely believe in the power of prayer—even if some of us are no longer sure—and they decided long ago that publicity about their plight is more likely to inhibit their oppression than expose them to greater risks. They settled long ago the problem of whether it is best for Westerners to keep quiet or to speak out, and that decision rests with people not only who are best informed but who also have the most to lose if that judgment is wrong. So-called quiet diplomacy that serves as an excuse for nonaction or is based on nothing more than moral cowardice is obviously despicable.

Third, I think Congress and the Executive do have different roles in this matter. The role of Congress, as I see it, is precisely the one it has chosen and at which it so far has done a good job; namely, publicizing factual situations and adopting concurrent resolutions expressing concern at clear evidence of injustice and undemocratic practices in the field of religious freedom. This hearing, as I said earlier, is a good example of the role Congress can and should play.

The role of the executive branch, as I see it, is more complex, more concrete, and also more demanding. The executive branch has the organization and manpower to systematically collect and evaluate information of many kinds from many sources. It can make decisions and take action based on a broad range of facts that the ordinary citizen cannot have. And it has some possibility of face-to-face dealing with Soviet officials. So one should be slow to criticize and generally trust the Executive in this daily process. No one objects to quiet diplomacy that produces positive results, seldom though it is. But everyone should object if U.S. diplomacy in pursuing a long list of conflicting goals ever seems to sacrifice basic principles of religious liberty for expediency. If I would fault the executive branch—and I don't mean the present administration but all administrations of the last 40 years—it would be that our policy regularly underestimates the power of religion and religious traditions in foreign countries, especially in Communist States, and that even today our Government devotes inadequate resources and expertise to research on this vital aspect of the Soviet scene.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we have to realize that influencing the Soviet Government's religious policy is not something that can be measured like a box score or any other success indicator. Moscow will never give us that satisfaction. We all know the ridiculous lengths they go to just to avoid the appearance of yielding to outside pressure. Just think how many years it took for them to solve the question of the Pentecostalist Seven in our Moscow Embassy. The solution was one they could and should have taken at the beginning. The case of Academician Sakharov and his wife is a current example. But scoring visible successes is not the essence of promoting religious liberty in the U.S.S.R. We have to persist, with patience and firmness, and have faith that influence is being exerted even when all immediate signs point to the contrary.

The **Chairman**. Thank you.

Ms. Fitzpatrick, one last short question, because just last week in Strassbourg, France—June 4 actually—a formal declaration expressing concern over the treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union and viewing the curtailment of their right to emigrate as a barrier to improved East-West relations was released.

It was signed by 240 parliamentarians in Europe. Can a document like this have an effect on the Soviet Union, in your judgment? Can more be done by the Parliaments of Europe? Is this document one of the first times that so many members of the European Parliaments have intervened on behalf of Soviet Jews?

Ms. **Fitzpatrick**. Well, to answer the last part of your question, it is not the first time. There have been interventions by individual members of European Parliaments, particularly under pressure from citizens in Europe. But I am not aware of an appeal signed by so many at once.

And I think this is crucial in our advocacy of human rights, that we develop more of a constituency in Europe and that we encourage and promote more of these kinds of public statements from Europe, because, as I mentioned in my testimony, European countries now are somewhat removed from the fray of the struggles and tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States, and they are in a position to make some impact on Soviet and East European officials.

We need to increase the kind of hearings that we are having right now in Europe. In this country there is much more of a tradition of citizens lobbying their elected officials, of grassroots organizations, the numerous Soviet Jewry councils that exist, for example.

In Europe this tradition is not as much developed, and this is certainly one of the reasons why we helped to found the International Helsinki Federation. So I think it will take a combination of citizen and government effort in this sphere.

The **Chairman**. I would like to announce that we have asked for written testimony from a number of witnesses. Anna Faltus, the vice president of the Czechoslovak National Council of America, has written a statement. It has been received and it will be inserted in the record at this point.

[Ms. Faltus' prepared statement follows:]

Prepared Statement of Anna Faltus, Vice President, Czechoslovak National Council of America, Cicero, IL

RELIGION AND CHURCHES IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

According to the last official census concerning religious adherence of the population in Czechoslovakia, which was held in 1930, about 73.5 percent of the people were affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church, and 20.7 percent with other churches. Those without religious affilitation numbered about 5.8 percent.

There are, at present, no official documents containing information about religious affiliation, and no church records are kept. It is, therefore, impossible to give more than estimates concerning the actual number of believers.

According to a report on Czechoslovakia, prepared by Amnesty International in 1981, the number of Roman Catholics is estimated at about 70 percent of a population of more than 14 million, and about 15 percent of the population is affiliated with various Protestant Churches.

Of the 18 churches and religious communities recognized by the state, the Roman Catholic Church—as stated above—is the largest. The second largest church is the Czechoslovak Hussite Church, which originated in 1920. The most important Protestant Churches are the Slovak Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren and the Reformed Church in Slovakia.

HISTORY OF THE CHURCHES SINCE 1948

After the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in 1948, the church lands in the whole of Czechoslovakia were nationalized and several laws, related to the churches, were introduced. These laws, which permit complete state control over the church, are still in force today.

The 1950's witnessed a harsh repression of the church. Archbishop Beran was confined to house arrest; all the bishops were interned in prisons or labor camps. Most of the priests were imprisoned or barred from exercising their priestly duties. Thousands of Catholic laypeople also spent many years in prison.

During Alexander Dubcek's Prague Spring of 1968, there was an improvement in church-state relations. Clergy and lay people who were imprisoned, were released and rehabilitated. Censorship of the religious press was lifted and a number of bishops were reinstated. However, after the Soviet invasion and occupation of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, the situation has deteriorated again. The laws and decrees passed after the Communist takeover in 1948, concerning state control over the church, have been in full force again since 1969.

In October 1949, the State Office for Church Affairs was established; its commissars oversee episcopal administration, regulate church budgets and salaries and appointment of clergy. There are actually three State Offices for Church Affairs: a federal office, an office for the Czech lands and an office for Slovakia. Through these offices the state is able to regulate and control the organization of the churches.

Priests are allowed to celebrate masses, and believers are allowed to attend them. However, neither are free from intimidation and discrimination, Permission of the State Office for Religious Affairs is required for church meetings, cultural activities and religious gatherings of young people.

Priests, who do not confine their activities to the celebration of Masses, are being accused of "abuse of religious office" (para 101 of the Czechoslovak Penal Code, which may bring prison terms of 6 months to 3 years) or of "obstructing state supervision over churches and religious societies" (para 178 of the Czechoslovak Penal Code, with prison sentences of up to 2 years).

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Due to the fact that the Roman Catholic Church is the largest in Czechoslovakia, more information is available on the problems it faces. However, much of the general information can be applied to the Protestant churches of Czechoslovakia, which suffer under the same oppression.

One of the most pressing problems the Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia is facing is that of the vacant bishoprics. According to the latest available information only 3 out of the 13 dioceses are administered by residential bishops: Prague (by Cardinal Frantisek Tomasek), Banska Bystrica and Nitra in Slovakia. Two dioceses (Olomouc and Trnava) have apostolic administrators and the remaining 8 are supervised by general vicars who have not been appointed by the Vatican. The Czechoslovak authorities want to see as bishops those priests who have embraced the state-supported Pacem in Terris movement of Catholic clergy.

While there are several bishop seats vacant, there are bishops who were stripped of official authorization to exercise their pastoral duties. The most poignant is the case of Bishop Jan Korec in Slovakia, who was sentenced in 1960 to 12 years imprisonment, released in 1968 and sentenced to serve the remainder of his sentence in 1974. He contracted tuberculosis. Since his release he has worked as a railway porter and a maintenance mechanic and is under constant police surveillance.

According to Amnesty International Report on Czechoslovakia (1981), the number of Roman Catholic priests who have a license to perform their priestly duties is about 3,200 to 3,300. In 1948 the number of active priests was about 7,000. The estimated number of parishes without priests is close to 2,000.

The number of priests is reduced, most frequently, by withdrawal of the permit to exercise priestly duties. This withdrawal of permit is directed especially against priests who have been successful with children and youth. Another way of reducing the number of priests is retiring them early. They have to undergo a medical examination, which puts them on a disability status. No appeal is permitted.

There is yet another way of reducing the number of priests: the government decree No/112/50 of July 14, 1950 closed all Catholic theological faculties but two: the seminaries of Prague (later Litomerice) for the Czech lands and that of Bratislava for Slovakia.

According to Cardinal Tomasek, the number of seminarians is fixed in advance and always so that it does not suffice to replace retired or disqualified priests. Many applicants are being disqualified for being "burdened with religious prejudices". Applicants ". . . have to be loyal to the state, their conduct must be irreproachable and must also have other qualifications necessary for admission to state service . . .". Applicants who have been rejected are excluded from admission to any other institution of higher learning.

The active priests are overworked; very often they must care for three or more parishes. If a parish is not served by a priest for three consecutive months, it is automatically liquidated. And since 1980, priests, whose authorization has been withdrawn, are no longer allowed to assist in religious rites as co-celebrants. Those priests have to earn their living by doing manual work.

Priests, who keep on celebrating mass after their permit has been withdrawn, are charged under para. 178 of the Czechoslovak Penal Code (obstructing state supervision over churches and religious societies) and can be sentenced for up to 2 years imprisonment.

Theoretically, religious education of children is permitted in elementary schools, provided, both parents agree. However, they have to execute complicated application forms and there are penalties for those, who permit their children to attend religious classes. Children, who have taken religious courses, are automatically barred from higher education and very often their parents lose their jobs. On the other hand, the authorities are most anxious to sign up as many children and adults in "Atheistic Education Courses".

Priests, who teach religion outside of school, to private groups of children, are charged under para. 178 of the Czechoslovak Penal Code (obstructing state supervision over churches and religious societies).

The Catholic Church has no control over the "catholic" press in Czechoslovakia. It is being controlled by the state or by the priests who are members of the government directed Pacem in Terris Movement. No religious books are published in Czechoslovakia, while the number of anti-religious publication has increased. The press has also been attacking Pope John Paul II and the "secret" church in Czechoslovakia.

THE "SECRET OR UNDERGROUND CHURCH"

The last few years have seen signs of a revival of religious life, particularly among the young. This fact was recognized even by the Federal State Office for Church Affairs, with a comment by its director, Karel Hruza: ". . . There were times when one saw only old grandmothers in the churches. Today you will also find young people there . . . This is—as is being explained—the result of the young people searching for a new goal in life, for something better than consumerism and other set forms.

There is also another aspect to this phenomenon: more and more young priests and laypeople seem to be unwilling to conform to the rigid restrictions imposed upon the life of the church. They are engaged in religious activities, which are not permitted within the existing provisions, but they are prepared to take the risk. They also seem to be prepared to suffer harsh repression if exposed.

The increased religious activism found expression in many ways:

The continuing activity of priests whose permit has been withdrawn;

The emergency of clandestine religious orders;

Clandestine religious instruction of young people;

Letters of protest.—During the last several years many letters were sent to the authorities, to the Pope and to the Church itself protesting the lack of freedom and against repression.

Protest actions.—Hunger strike of 120 students (out of 147) at the theological faculty in Bratislava (October 1980) protesting the growing influence of Pacem in Terris in the Faculty.

Petitions.—Such as the most recent one when over 17,000 signatures were collected asking Pope John Paul II to come to Czechoslovakia. According to the latest information, these petitions have already been delivered to the Vatican.

The activities of the secretly ordained priests;

The production of religious samizdat.—The growth of the underground religious literature has been enormous. Over 700 titles on theology, philosophy and catechics have appeared in large quantities. Three catholic periodicals have been circulating clandestinely: "Teologicke Texty" (Theological Texts—a quarterly), "Vzkriseni" (Ressurection, a monthly for the young) and "Informance o Cirkvi" (Church Information), giving details about the life of the church in Czechoslovakia.

The regime is determined to stop the flow of samizdat publications and has conducted many raids on parish houses and homes for retired priests—such as:

On October 27-29, 1981, the Home of Charity in Kadan, housing 90 aged sisters. It was surrounded by 48 members of the security police and subjected to a two day search. The police confiscated over 800 religious books, some of them published before 1948.

On October 27, 1981, the Home of Charity in Moravec, about 300 miles from Kadan. About 110 members of the security police with dogs invaded this home for retired priests. They confiscated all religious literature and handwritten notes.

On November 23, 1981, the convent in Jablonne was surrounded by about 80 members of the security police, who interrogated all those who lived there and confiscated all religious literature.

On March 27, 1983, the members of the security police decended on homes housing members of the Franciscan Order in Prague, Bratislava, Plzen, Vysoka u Melnika, in Jindrichuv Hradec, in Jesenice u Prahy, in Liberec, in Roztoky u Prahy, in Trnava, Hlohovec, Poprad, Ruzomberok, in Vranov, Presov, in Kosice and elsewhere. The homes were searched, religious literature was confiscated and many members of the Order were interrogated and imprisoned. A petition signed by 3,397 believers, Catholics and Protestants, was sent to the President of the Republic, Dr. Gustav Husak, protesting this action.

During these raids the security police also confiscated typewriters, paper, tapes, duplicating machines and anything else that could be used in the production of samizdat.

Because most of the activities are being conducted underground, or in secret this has led some people in the CSSR and abroad to speak of a "secret church."

PERSECUTION AND IMPRISONMENT

The following persons, priests, laypeople, catholics and protestants have been either persecuted or imprisoned for religious activities or activities connected with the defense of religious rights within the context of human rights in Czechoslovakia. The list presented below is based on information available to us. Many other believers are being persecuted but their fate did not come to the attention of the public:

Imprisoned or detained under para. 178 of the Czechoslovak Penal Code (obstructing state supervision of churches and religious societies) or under para. 101 of the Czechoslovak Penal Code (abusing religious office)

Barta, Josef, 59 years, catholic priest, in Liberec in 1982 to 18 months (died of a heart attack, while being transferred to prison).

Benes, Vit, priest of the Dominican Order, detained in Plzen, December 1983.

Cabak, Martin, catholic priest in Slovakia, detained in December 1983.

Cervena, Marta, born 1954, layperson, detained in Zilina for 2 months, April 1983.

Dolista, Josef, born 1954, catholic priest, tried in Melnik, June 1982, trial postponed indefinitely.

Duka, Jaroslav Dominik, catholic priest, in Plzen, December 1981 to 15 months.

Gondova, Helena, born 1949, bookkeeper, in Bratislava in January 1983, to 1 year.

Hlozanka, Radim, born 1923, administrator, in Litomerice, March 1982, to 20 months.

Holickova, Anna, born 1953, layperson, detained in Zilina, 2 months, April 1983.

Ivakova, Olga, born 1955, layperson, detained in Zilina, 2 months, April 1983.

Javorsky, Stefan, catholic priest, Spisska Nova Ves, September 1981 to 2 years.

Kajnek, Josef, catholic priest, detained in Kutna Hora, April 1984.

Keller, Jan, Czech Brethren Evang. Church, in Cernosin, December 1983, detained.

Kesegova, Emilie, born 1952, librarian, in Bratislava, October 1980, to 4 months.

Kordik, Josef, born 1948, catholic priest, in Louny, September 1981, to 1 year, suspended sentence.

Labuda, Jozef, born 1949, catholic priest, in Bratislava, October 1980, to 6 months.

Mazanec, Jiri, 55 years, Franciscan Order, in Plzen, July 1983, to 8 months.

Mihalusova, Stepanka, born 1936, layperson, detained in Zilina, 2 months, April 1983.

Mokry, Jan, layperson, in Sumperk, September 1983, to 12 months, suspended sentence.

Nepsinsky, Vojtech, priest in Slovakia, December 1983, detained, interrogated.

Novojavsky, Frantisek, born 1956, layperson, in Bratislava, January 1983, to 1 year.

Podolinsky, Stefan, Franciscan Order, in Banska Bystrica, May 1983, detained for 3 months.

Pometlo, Frantisek M., 45 years, Franciscan Order, in Plzen, July 1983 to 6 months.

Povala, Gabriel, born 1917, catholic priest, in Zilina, November 1981, to 8 months.

Rompf, Gunther, 40 years, layperson, in Bratislava, September 1981, to 2 years.

Snajdr, Jiri, layperson, Sumperk, September 1983, 10 months, suspended sentence.

Urban, Stefan, 35 years, layperson, Zvolen, 1983, 6 months, suspended sentence.

Zlatohlavy, Anton, born 1951, administrator, Kosice, April 1981, to 2 years.

Members of Franciscan Order, detained in Slovakia on March 27, 1983

Brazda, Jaroslav, born 1952, in Kosice.
Bystrik, (first name unknown), in Kosice.
Glabasnia, Anton, born 1955, in Bratislava.
Rucka, Peter, born 1955, in Bratislava.
Smid, Anton, born 1955, in Bratislava.

Members of Franciscan Order detained in the Czech lands, March 27, 1983

Jachym, Miroslav, born 1927, Jindrichuv Hradec.
Kubicek, Frantisek, from Jilji near Prague.
Moc, Jaroslav, from Prague.
Moravec, Jiri and Glubasnia, Alois, from Ostrava.
Tuma, Jiri, from Prague.
Zlamal, Vojtech, from Prague.

Imprisoned or detained under para. 118 of the Czechoslovak Penal Code (unauthorized business venture—distributing unauthorized religious material)

Adamek, Josef, layperson, born 1914, Charter 77 signatory, Olomouc, September 1979, to 14 months.

Krumpholc, Jan, layperson, born 1927, Olomouc, September 1979, to 3 years.

Lizna, Frantisek, born 1941, Jesuit priest, Charter 77 signatory, Olomouc, September 1979, to 20 months.

Odstrcil, Jan, 57 years, layperson, Olomouc, September 1979, to 10 months.

Smahel, Rudolf, born 1950, Jesuit priest, Olomouc, September 1979, to 2 years.

Simsa, Jan, born 1929, Czech Brethren Evang. Church, October 1979, 8 months.

Detained and interrogated

Bisek, Tomas, Czech Brethren Evang. Church, Chapter 77 signatory, in Teleci.

Brtnik, Josef, in Brno; Krumpholc, Svatopluk, in Olomouc; Krcmery, Silvo, Dr. in Bratislava; Razik, Mecislav, Dr., in Brno.

Detained or imprisoned under para. 112 of the Czechoslovak Penal Code (harming the interests of the Republic abroad):

Duka, Jaroslav Dominik, Catholic priest, in Plzen, December 1981, for possessing religious literature published abroad.

Lizna, Frantisek, born 1941, Jesuit priest, Charter 77 signatory, in 1980 for writing a letter to his sister in England.

Detained, imprisoned or interrogated for various reasons concerning religious activities:

Litomisky, Jan, born 1943, Czech Brethren Evang. Church, Charter 77 signatory and member of VONS, in Litomerice and Ceske Budejovice, October 1981, to 3 years imprisonment and 2 years "house arrest" for distributing "anti-state" literature.

Kubik, Jiri, born 1941; Risler, Frantisek, born 1933; and Taborsky, Zdenek, born 1949—All three were sentenced to 13 months imprisonment in July 1983, in Usti and Labem for practicing religion as Jehovah Witnesses, which is not recognized by the state.

Borovsky, Bronislav, 19 years; Gabaj, Alois, 23 years; and Konc, Tomas, 20—All three detained in Kosice awaiting trial for "smuggling" Bibles.

Juracek, Jozef; Sadovsky, Jozef; and Svec, Ota—All three were detained and interrogated in March 1984, in Velka Mana, Slovakia, regarding petitions asking Pope Paul John II to visit Czechoslovakia.

Stieranka, Martin, 40 years, detained March 26, 1984 in Rustin near Dolni Kubin for possessing a petition (concerning the visit of Pope Paul John II in Czechoslovakia) with 1,000 signatures. Interrogated, beaten.

Micianova, Jana, teacher, fired from her teaching position for practicing religion. Appeal denied in Povazska Bystrica in April 1984.

Maly, Vaclav, born 1950, Catholic priest, Charter 77 signatory and its spokesman, member of VONS; detained for several months in 1979; interrogated and detained several times since then (last known detention and interrogation, March 1984) for working in the field of religious and human rights.

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The **Chairman**. Mr. Istvan Gereben, executive secretary, Coordinating Committee of Hungarian Organizations in North America, has submitted a statement and it will be inserted in the record at this point also.

[Mr. Gereben's prepared statement follows:]

COORDINATING COMMITTEE
OF
HUNGARIAN ORGANIZATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

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THE SITUATION OF THE CHURCHES IN HUNGARY

Statement
of
The Coordinating Committee of Hungarian Organizations in North America
submitted to be included in the
record of the Hearing before the

Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
on
The Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in
Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union

June 12, 1984

Istvan B. Gereben
Executive Secretary

The Coordinating Committee of Hungarian Organizations in North America is pleased to express its support for the Senate concurrent resolution submitted by senators Claiborne Pell and Charles Percy, expressing the sense of Congress concerning infringements on religious freedom by the governments of the Warsaw Pact states.

We are pleased that this matter is being addressed by this forum. However, cognizant of the grave situation of religious groups in Hungary and aware of the lack of proper detailed information about their problems, we ask that the subcommittee consider the following amendment for inclusion in the preambles of the resolution:

> "Whereas Hungary has exerted a sophisticated form of state control and has successfully compromised and coopted the leaderships of every major religious group and has terrorized the smaller ones by subtle, hard-to-document, but nevertheless effective means, and it continues to persecute the ever growing number of religious people who refuse to cooperate in the destruction of religious independence and the denial of freedom of thought, and has succeeded in convincing a large portion of Western public opinion, in many cases including the leaderships of religious organizations of its tolerance and liberalism in religious matters;"

To justify the above amendment and to contribute toward clarifying the situation of religious groups in Hungary, we offer the following brief series of comments along with selected examples from the life of some of Hungary's religious groups. Aware that the lack of space does not provide us with the opportunity to cover a rather large topic as thoroughly as it may require, we ask you to consider this as merely an introduction to the complex world of religious persecution that exists in Hungary today. For more detailed documentary evidence, we have attached a series of annexes. We are not discussing the problems of the two largest protestant groups in Hungary, the Reformed and the Lutheran Churches, since these will be presented in a separate statement by Reverend Janos Butosi, pastor of the Hungarian Reformed Church of Bridgeport, CT.

The largest religious group and thus the one most prone to the political manipulations of the state in Hungary is the Catholic Church. It has experienced some of the most extreme forms of persecution since the Second World War, documented in great detail by many writers. Perhaps the best known of these was Cardinal Jozsef Mindszenty[1]. Since of all the religious groups, the Catholic Church has been the best organized and the most powerful, the destruction of its hierarchy and the successful subjugation of its leadership to the will and interests of the Hungarian state is a separate story in itself[2]. Suffice it to say here that all objective evidence supports the contention that the present primate, Cardinal Laszlo Lekai represents the interests of the state in any matter that may be construed as a challenge to its power and represents the interests of the Church only as an institution, the hierarchy only as an establishment.[3]

The clearest example of this institutional bias which guards the status quo more fervently than the rights of individual church members is given by the conflict between the Hungarian hierarchy and those basis groups which advocate a refusal to do military service. The leader of these groups, the Piarist priest Gyorgy Bulanyi, has been subjected to harassment unparalleled in the recent history of the Church. His treatment can only be compared to that suffered by him and by many of his religious brethren in the 50's under the Stalinist regime of Matyas Rakosi. To underline the fact that the State Office of Religious Affairs (AEH) and those it allows the Vatican to appoint to leadership positions in the Church hardly differ in their methods from another infamous state agency which existed in Hungary before the revolution of 1956, it is enough to quote Father Bulanyi's words about the treatment he received at the hands of the representatives of the Church hierarchy. He writes that the major in the Hungarian State Protective Agency (the infamous AVH secret police whose acronym differs from the above mentioned Office of Religious Affairs only by one letter, a fact not lost on those who suffer under its authority) who interrogated him in 1952 was more respectful toward his person and his activities than those Church leaders who subjected him to something that "could in no way be called a dialogue."[4]

Statements made by Cardinal Lekai, especially at the 125 anniversary celebration of the consecration of the basilica at Esztergom in 1981, are clear indications that the prelate chooses to subordinate the interests of the Church in all questions that have to do with military service to those of the state. He does so even though the dangers to the people of Hungary inherent in any strict adherence to Soviet military interests are well known among Hungarians both within and without the country.

The list of those persecuted by the state with the active consent and help of the hierarchy grows longer and longer as the number of those unwilling to cooperate in short-changing Catholic religious principles and denying Hungarian national interests grows. Two priests who support Father Bulanyi and who openly expressed their views were suspended by the hierarchy in 1981 from the performance of their priestly duties. Six priests who protested in an open letter against the treatment of the above two were subjected to a series of "administrative restrictions." One of the latter, has disclosed through private channels how these innocuous sounding retributions work in practice. He was at first threatened with the possibility of not being ordained, since when he first signed the protest letter, he was still a novice at the Theological Seminary of Budapest. When this threat could not be carried out, he was told by a priest representing the hierarchy and the Office of Religious Affairs that if he were willing to cooperate, he could be one of the rising stars in the hierarchy. Nothing, not even the position of bishop could be denied him, especially considering that he was one of the brightest students at the seminary. When he refused to cooperate, he was subjected to every form of harassment available to the authorities. Even though invited to study in the Federal Republic of Germany by a leading theologian, he was not given permission to leave the country. Periodic visa applications were denied on the basis that providing the visa harmed the interests of the People's Reuplic and the public welfare. He has been assigned to small, out-of-the-way parishes in the hope that his will would eventually be broken. In spite of the fact that he is qualified to do scholarly theological research, (he is capable of using a number of the major European languages as well as Latin and Hebrew) he works with the youth in his parish and does everything in his power to keep alive religion among those entrusted to him. He also is working on his doctoral dissertation which he is not sure will be accepted in Hungary. In case he meets with rejection, he intends to submit his work to a Western Theological University or Department.

The limited space here does not allow anything but a presentation of a few brief examples. One that is most tragic and can only be sketched is the case of a 49 year old mathematician and his son, both of whom are conscientious objectors. The father, despite his age, was called up for military service in 1979. After he refused to comply, he was imprisoned for six months and subsequently was transferred to a mental hospital for treatment. When he was released, he lost his job at the Mathematical Research Institute and was allowed to return there only as a librarian. His son served a two-year prison term for the same "offense" as his father.

One final comment about the role of the compromised Hungarian hierarchy is in order here, since it concerns efforts made by them on behalf of the Hungarian government to influence the many parishes of emigrant Catholics. Especially efforts made in this direction in America should be of interest to the Senators. The Coordinating Committee suspects on the basis of circumstantial evidence that through the efforts of the Hungarian hierarchy, a number of priests in the U.S. have been removed from thier parishes because they represented and promoted traditional Catholic positions and national interests. Also, on the occassion of his visit to the U.S. to participate in the World Eucharistic Congress held in Philadelphia in 1976, Cardinal Lekai brought many thousands of volumes of a recently published Hungarian language bible to give to Catholics even though only 72,000 copies had been printed in Hungary. Soon after publication, the book was not available to the country's faithful who live outside of Budapest, and even there it was only available at one religious bookstore. Considering the fact that bibles are available in many languages to the faithful living outside the country, and that those Hungarians who live in Hungary have an extremely limited supply, this action can be seen as harmful to the interests of the Cardinal's flock.

The Hungarian regime's exploitation of religious leaders is well illustrated by the recently issued declaration condeming "U.S. imperialism that threatens world peace." This statement was signed jointly by the leaders of Hungary's major religions. A group of young Jewish intellectuals issued a Manifesto protesting the action of the Jewish leaders stating that they "had no right to sign on behalf of Hungarian Jewry a unilateral declaration that ignores the role of Soviet weapons held by Arabs who are plotting to annihilate Israel."

Hungarian authorities not only exploit the Jewish leaders to further the cause of the international aims of the Soviets, but outright persecute the Jewish faithful. Two students of the Rabbinical Institute of Hungary, Ferenc Benyi (born in 1960) and Tamas Szabados (born in 1963) were drafted in the Army in 1982. (Students of the seminaries of all religions routinely are drafted after the acceptance by the seminaries for military duty, during which they are exposed to special hardships, harassements to discourage them to return to the seminaries). Both Benyi and Szabados requested permission to adhere to the regulations of their religion:

opportunity to pray twice daily, access to ritual food, and observance of Jewish religious holidays. After their request was made they were arrested and transported to a military penitentiary. There they were forced to take off their religious clothing worn under their shirts. At their trial, they were informed that if they insisted at their request they face a possible 4 year internment for denial of military service. Benyi and Szabados withdrew their request and received "only" a 1 year suspended jail sentence. Benyi returned to the barracks, Szabados was taken to a military psychiatric institute for treatment of schizophrenia. Benyi, with the other draftees from theological seminaries, cannot attend church, cannot visit any religious activities, and are forbidden to assemble for any reason for the duration of his military service.

The example of these two Jewish students illustrates the sophisticated method of using military service to disrupt theological studies and discourage seminarians to pursue their chosen vocation.

A few short comments must also be made about the situation of small Christian denominations who because of their limited numbers are often more prone to persecution by "administrative means." One glaring example of such a group is that of the Nazarenes who were persecuted for many years for their refusal to do military service and came to an agreement with the state in 1977. This provides that they can perform military duties that satisfy both the country's compulsory service laws and their religious beliefs. We do not know exactly what they had to agree to as far as the government was concerned, but the fact that an agreement was reached was due probably to their small number and the government's desire to conform to the Helsinki accords, at least in this respect. A similar agreement with the much larger Catholic Church is out of the question since that would involve a large enough portion of the country's population to possibly cause problems with Hungary's Warsaw Pact "allies."

Finally, the situation of the Seventh Day Adventists must be mentioned. Their leadership, hand-picked by the state authorities, carried out the measures designed to destroy the autonomy of the Church. In their case as in the case of the Nazarenes the methods of intimidation were often more blatant than those applied against larger groups such as the Catholics. Nonetheless, these are all familiar to those who have studied totalitarian systems. They are always selected in such a way as to make documentation difficult if not impossible. Reminiscent of the intimidation known in the U.S. to those who are familiar with the ways of organized crime, these are always directed at the isolated individual who fears to appeal his case to international forums or to free public opinion, just as the victim of organized crime in the U.S. is afraid to go to the courts or the police. The reasons are also sometimes similar. For example, the knowledge that a large portion of the Western press and many religious leaders are terribly naive about the extent of state control in the East is analogous to the fear of the victim of crime in the U.S. that the courts and the police are paid off by the leaders of organized crime.

In the case of the Seventh Day Adventists, some of the state "appointed" leaders were so dissolute and morally reprehensible that they eventually had to give up their positions.

The inevitable results of the state's manipulations was a split between the leadership and a group of preachers and faithful who chose an independent path. Their goal, as in the case of the Catholic basis groups, was to return the Church to its earlier, autonomous state. They seek a return to the original principles of their religion, free of political manipulation and the direction of state authority. Especially since the latter is so avowedly hostile to their views of the world and has expressed on numerious occasions its purpose of destroying all religious movements.

One comment must be made in closing, especially for the sake of those who belittle opposition in Hungary, whether it is within the world of religious people or in society in general. A country such as Hungary, in which power is concentrated in the hands of the state and where it is always ultimately up to the state how it uses that power, any form of opposition must be taken much more seriously than in a democracy. Whereas in the latter a small group of people with strong opinions, or even extreme ones, can have an echo way out of proportion to their numbers, in Hungary even one lonely voice, without any publicity or forum, without the least traces of an echo speaks for a possible multitude of silent, terrified people who have no way of expressing their dissatisfaction and who are too afraid to stand up for their freedoms. So that, rather than belittling the "isolated manifestations" of protest, we should see them as the reflections of a deep-seated dissatisfaction not only with the way the state treats a religious group, but with the whole unberable uniformity of life under a totalitarian system. Each religious person, whether he is a Nazarene, a Seventh Day Adventist, a Baptist, a Jew, or a Catholic, when he protests about his lack of freedom to practice his faith in the way he believes it to be his inalienable right is speaking for millions of Hungarians who given the chance to speak without fear or the danger of retribution would speak up about the abuses of freedom and of human rights that they have suffered under the "liberal" Kadar regime.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Jozsef Cardinal Mindszenty, Memoirs, Macmillan Publishing Co., New York, 1974.

[2] See "A Summary of the Situation of the Hungarian Catholic Church," in Annex 8.

[3] Janos Wildmann, Az uralkodo egyhaztol a nepi egyhazig (From the ruling to the populist Church); Katolikus Szemle, Rome, 1984 no. 1.

[4] See Bulanyi's letter to Cardinal Lekai in "Religion in Communist Lands", Keston College, 1984 I.

[5] For the complete speech, see Uj Ember, 20 September 1981. For a discussion of this speech and the suspension of Andras Gromon and Laszlo Kovacs, see Hungarian Situation Report/16, Radio Free Europe Research, 29 October 1981, Item 4.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Each issue of the samizdat publication BESZELO has presented something about the problems of religious groups in Hungary. In particular, the details of the state's actions against the Seventh Day Adventists and the Jewish students can be found in BESZELO 4, 5-6 respectively.

The fate of this publication is uncertain. We have not seen any issues since the end of last year.

2. Lengthy bibliographies have been compiled by various individuals, among these: Janos Wildmann, "Das Kirchenverstandnis der Katholischen Basisgruppen in Ungarn," (The Idea of the Church Among the Catholic Basis Groups in Hungary), Dissertation for the Theological Faculty of Luzern, advisior: Professor Josef Bommer, August, 1983, Luzern, Switzerland.

3. Radio Free Europe Research follows developments in the Hungarian Churches carefully. Most of its reports are available.

4. The publications of the Hungarian Institute for Sociology of Religion, based in Vienna, Austria, are also useful in the assessment of the situation of the Catholic Church in Hungary especially the two recently published books: Emeric Andras and Julius Morel: "Hungarian Catholicism: A Hand Book, 1983 and Emeric Andras and Julius Morel: Church in Transition. 1983.

COORDINATING COMMITTEE
OF
HUNGARIAN ORGANIZATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

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ATTACHEMENTS

to

THE SITUATION OF THE CHURCHES IN HUNGARY

Statement
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Istvan B. Gereben
Executive Secretary

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ANNEX 1

EDICT NO. 22 OF 1957 ON THE REQUIREMENT OF GOVERNMENT APPROVAL FOR THE FILLING OF CERTAIN ECCLESIASTICAL POSITIONS

* PUBLISHED IN MAGYAR KOZLONY ON MARCH 24, 1957.

ANNEX 1

According to Section 54, Paragraph (2) of our Constitution the Hungarian People's Republic separates the church from the state in interest of guaranteeing freedom of conscience. In accordance with this, our government does not exercise the right of supreme patronage exercised by Hungarian sovereigns throughout the centures which deeply interfered with the life of the Roman Catholic Church. It is necessary, however, to assure the interests of the state in connection with certain appointments by the churches in order to assert the state's sovereignty. Therefore, the Presidium of the Hungarian People's Republic issued the following Edict.

> *Sec. 1. (1) All appointments and assignments to the positions and titles of the Roman Catholic Church in the territory of the Hungarian People's Republic which, according to the provision of the Church rules, fall within the jurisdiction of the Pope of Rome, as well as all activities of such character require prior approval of the President of the Hungarian People's Republic.*
>
> *(2) The prior approval of the Presidium of the Hungarian People's Republic shall be required for appointments to or dismissal from the positions of bishops, district superintendents, ecumenical as well as district supervisors of the Presbyterian and Lutheran Churches; of the chairman, vice chairmen, and general secretary of the National Bureau of Hungarian Jews, the chairman and assistant chairmen of the Jewish Community of Budapest; and of the chairmen of the Orthodox and Neolog Rabbinical Councils.*
>
> *Sec. 2. (1) The prior approval of the Minister of Eduction shall be required for the validity of appointments (elections, assignments), transfers to, and dismissals from, the following positions:*
>
> > *(a) the positions of canons, diocesan (archdiocesan, canonical) vicars and directors of diocesan (archdiocesan) chanceries, deans, and pastors of cities and county seats, the appointment of which is within the jurisdiction of Roman Catholic bishops (archbishops);*
> >
> > *(b) the positions of rectors, deans, principals, and professors of all theological schools (universities, faculties) and rabbinical institutions, principals of religious high schools.*
>
> *(2) The Minister of Education may delegate the authority vested in him under the previous paragraph to another government agency.*
>
> *Sec. 3 The method of the government approval required for the appointments, transfers to, and dismissals from positions shall be regulated by agreements between the Hungarian State and the churches. Until such agreements enter into force, the appointments (transfers, dismissals) falling under Section 1, Paragraph (1) may only take place through separate agreements in each case to be concluded between the state and the Roman Catholic Church. The methods of the appointments (transfers, and dismissals) to the positions listed in Section 1, Paragraph (2), and Section 2, shall be provided for by the Decree of the Hungarian Revolutionary Worker-Peasant Government.*
>
> *Section 4. The provisions of sections 1 and 2 of the present edict shall apply to all those appointments (transfers, dismissals), which took place after October 1, 1956.*
>
> *Sec. 5. The present edict shall enter into force on the day of its promulgation. Edict No. 20 of 1951 shall be repealed.*

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ANNEX 2

Decree No. 21/1957 (III.24), Korm., on Religious Education

* PUBLISHED IN MAGYAR KOZLONY, ON MARCH 24, 1957.

ANNEX 2

According to Edict No. 5 of 1949 of the Presidium of the People's Republic religious education in schools is not compulsory. In the interest of the implementation of this edict, the Hungarian Revolutionary Worker-Peasant Government decrees the following:

> *Sec. 1. (1) Religious education shall be regarded as the exclusive private affair of the citizens according to the principles of the free practice of religion included in section 54 of the Constitution, and according to the spirit of the agreements (concluded) between the state and the churches. It shall be assured to citizens that their minor children attending general schools, and general high schools may, or may not, participate in religious education.*
>
> *(2) The freedom to participate or not in religious education shall be observed by everybody. Energetic measures with the full force of law shall be taken against anybody who:*
>
> > *(a) uses religious education for political purposes against the state, social, or economic order of the Hungarian People's Republic;*
> >
> > *(b) tries to influence a decision on participation or non-participation in religious education by force, threat, or deceit;*
> >
> > *(c) prevents religious education, or participation in it by force or threat.*
>
> *Sec.2. (1) Religious education shall be given as a freely elected subject in the general schools and general high schools.*
>
> *(2) Religion classes shall be held outside compulsory class time, before or after regular school hours, for two hours weekly, according to the prevalent school order.*
>
> *(3) Religious education may last from the beginning to the end of the school year.*
>
> *(4) If the principal of the school is not able to secure a suitable room in the school for some of the applicants for participation in religious education because of the lack of class rooms, the holding of religious classes on church premises may be permissable.*
>
> *Sec. 3. (1) Registrations for religious education shall be held each year not later than one week after the regular school registrations. Its exact time shall be made known by the press, the radio, and by the principals of the schools.*
>
> *(2) Registration for religious education shall take place in the same school where the students fulfill their obligation for regular school registration.*
>
> *(3) Whether a minor child should or should not participate in religious education shall be decided by the parent having the authority or parental supervision, or by the guardian.*
>
> *(4) The consent of the parent having the authority of parental supervision, or of the guardian shall be verified at the registration for religious education.*
>
> *Sec. 4. Only those persons shall be authorized to teach or supervise religious education who are assigned by the churches, have the (required) qualifications and have obtained the approval of the division of education of the county council's executive committee.*
>
> *Sec. 5. The present Decree shall enter into force on June 1, 1957, and the Minister of Education shall take care of its implementation.*

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ANNEX 3

Decree No. 18/1959 (IV.6) Korm., on the Implementation of Edict No. 22 of 1957, on the Requirement of Government Approval for the Filling of Certain Ecclesiastical Positions

* PUBLISHED IN MAGYAR KOZLONY, ON APR. 16, 1959.

ANNEX 3

Sec. 1. In order to obtain prior government approval, the church authority having jurisdiction to fill positions shall turn, via the competent government agency, to the Presidium of the Hungarian People's Republic before the appointments to positions enumerated in Section 1, Paragraph (2) of Edict No. 22 of 1957 (henceforth edict), are made, and in cases of positions listed in section 2 of the edict, to the competent government agency. This rule shall also apply in cases of transfers and dismissals.

Sec. 2. The appointments to ecclesiastical positions specified by sections 1 and 2 of the edict shall be regarded as valid, and, consequently, may only be made public, if the competent ecclesiastical authority obtained government approval. This provision shall also apply to transfers, removals, and dismissals.

Sec. 3. If an ecclesiastical position becomes vacant, and the competent church authority does not fill it within 90 days after the vacancy occurs in cases falling under section 1 of the edict, or within 60 days in cases of the positions listed in section 2 of the edict, the competent government agency shall take the necessary steps to assure the orderly course of pastoral services, ecclesiastical administration, or of the training of clergymen.

Sec. 4. (1) In cases of new appointments, the appointtes to the positions specified in sections 1 and 2 of the edict shall be obliged to take the oath prescribed by Decree No. 1000-1/1950 V.K.M. eln. within 60 days after their installation.

(2) Appointees to the positions listed in section 1 of the edict shall take the oath before the chairman of the Presidium of the People's Republic, and appointees to the positions enumerated in section 2 of the edict, before the chairman of the competent county (capital city, city with the rank of a county) council's executive committee.

(3) Records of the swearing in shall be made out in two copies and shall be signed by the persons administering and taking the oath. One copy shall be given to the person taking the oath, the other shall be preserved in the files of the agency administering the oath.

(4) Ecclesiastics not falling under the provisions of sections 1 and 2 of the edict shall also take the oath prescribed by paragraph (1) before the chairman of the competent county (capital city, city with the rank of a county) council's executive committee within 60 days after their appointment.

(5) Those ecclesiastics falling under sections 1 and 2 of the edict, as well as persons not falling under the edict who did not take an oath on the Hungarian People's Republic before the present decree entered into force, shall take the oath prescribed by paragraph (1) within 60 days after the present decree enters into force before a person competent according to paragraph (2) or (4).

Sec. 5. The present decree shall enter into force on the day of its promulgation.

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ANNEX 4 .

Edict No. 33 of 1956 on the Amalgamation and Dissolution of Certain Ministries

* PUBLISHED IN MAGYAR KOZLONY, ON DEC. 29, 1956.

ANNEX 4

*Sec. 3. The State Office of Church Affairs established by the Law No. 1 of 1951 * * * shall be dissolved as of December 31, 1956, and the jurisdiction thereof shall be transferred to the Ministry of Education.*

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ANNEX 5

Resolution No. 1045/1957 (IV.25.) Korm., on the Jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education

* PUBLISHED IN MAGYAR KOZLONY, ON APRIL 25, 1957.

ANNEX 5

2. The exercise of rights and (the fulfillment of) obligations deriving from the agreements between the State and the churches; approval of ecclesiastical appointments, and of laws and regulations adopted by the churches; the coordination of the foreign relations of the churches; the fulfillment of financial obligations connected with the churches shall be performed by the "Office of Church Affairs of the Ministry of Education" as a department of the Ministry. * * *

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ANNEX 6

Edict No. 25 of 1959, on the Establishment of the State Office of Church Affairs

* PUBLISHED IN MAGYAR KOZLONY, JUNE 2, 1959.

ANNEX 6

Sec. 1.(1) The State Office of Church Affairs shall be established to administer matters between the State and the churches.

(2) The State Office of Church Affairs shall be under the Supervision of the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers shall exercise its supervisory jurisdiction through one of its members.

Sec. 2. (1) The State Office of Church Affairs shall be headed by the Chairman, who shall be appointed by the Presidium of the People's Republic, on a proposal of the Council of Ministers.

(2) The Chairman shall be aided in the discharge of his duties by assistant chairmen appointed by the Council of Ministers.

Sec. 3. (1) Provisions concerning the organization, and activities of the State Office Affairs shall be laid down by the Council of Ministers.

(2) The personal and material expenditures connected with the establishment and activity of the State Office of Church Affairs shall be covered by the state budget under a separate title.

Sec. 4. (1) The present edict shall enter into force on the day of its promulgation; the Council of Ministers shall see to its implementation.

(2) On the entering into force of the present edict, that provision of Edict No. 33 of 1956 which transferred the jurisdiction of the State Office of Church Affairs to the Minister of Education shall be repealed.

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ANNEX 7

Decree No. 33/1959 (VI.2.) Korm., on the Implementation of Edict No. 25 of 1959, on the Establishment of the State Office of Church Affairs

ANNEX 7

Sec. 1. It shall be within the jurisdiction of the State Office of Church Affairs (henceforth: Office) established by Edict No. 25 of 1959 of the Presidium of the People's Republic to:

(a) implement agreements and accommodations concluded with the churches and denominations;

(b) administer personal and material affairs in connection with the state subsidies of the churches and denominations;

(c) pay personal and material subsidies serving the maintenance of the exempted religious and denominational general high schools;

(d) distribute and supervise the use of budget appropriations guaranteed for religious education in the schools;

(e) manage ecclesiastical funds and other financial matters of the churches;

(f) prepare legislation concerning the churches, and assure the implementation thereof;

(g) administer matters concerning the freedom of conscience and assure the free exercise of religion, and of the undisturbed course of ecclesiastical functions;

(h) implement and supervise measures taken by the Council of Ministers concerning the affairs of the churches.

(2) State supervision over religious and denominational general high schools operating by virtue of the agreements concluded with the churches and denominations shall be exercised by the Minister of Education. Similarly it shall be the duty of the Minister of Education and other educational agencies to supervise religious education in the schools from the educational viewpoint.

Sec. 2. The personnel and administrative setup of the Office shall be established by the Chairman in accordance with the general rules concerning the administrative setup of public offices. The Office in its business, shall directly communicate with the Ministries and other government agencies.

Sec. 4. The present decree enters into force on the day of its promulgation. On its entering into force Point 2 of Resolution No. 1045/1957 (IV.25) Korm., on the Jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education shall be repealed.

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ANNEX 8

A SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION OF THE HUNGARIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

by

Stephen Polgar

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A Summary of the Situation of the Hungarian Catholic Church

STEVEN POLGAR

In the past few years, a controversy has developed between a growing number of Catholics who have joined what are known as "basis groups" or "small communities" and the Hungarian Church hierarchy, headed by Cardinal László Lékai. Essentially, the disagreement has to do with the role of the Church in a country ruled by a totalitarian State. Whereas Cardinal Lékai and the Council of Bishops have decided to attempt to live within the realities presented by the rule of the communists in Hungary and to try to make the best of a bad situation, the basis communities, and especially some of their most able leaders such as Father György Bulányi, the Piarist priest, have argued that it is impossible to make compromises with a totalitarian state and a communist system which has set itself the goal of eradicating all religion from the lives of its citizens.

The leadership of the Church, in accord with the Vatican, noting Kádár's approach to the political situation in Hungary after 1963 and the end of the period of retribution that followed the 1956 Revolution, decided that in order to gain some advantages for the Church under this "new arrangement", they would have to be willing to make further compromises with the State. They decided to do this in spite of the fact that the Church had already forfeited her independence once, in an agreement forced upon her in 1950, and had subsequently been weakened by a number of years of Stalinist persecution. The bishops were hoping that through an arduously slow process of *realpolitik* they could re-establish some of their authority within the Church and initiate a process that could revitalise her deteriorating and in some cases even dying institutions.

In sharp contrast, and somewhat unexpectedly as far as the hierarchy was concerned, the basis groups, rooted in the private gatherings, the "underground Church" of the late forties and early fifties, chose another way to renew their faith. They insisted that Catholics could never make a compromise with the representatives of a system that did everything in its power to destroy them after the Second World War. Many of the members and most of the leaders of these groups had been imprisoned in

Rákosi's concentration camps. They had been tortured and threatened with the loss of everything from their jobs to their lives. They lived through or grew up in the era of Cardinal Mindszenty's stewardship of the Church's affairs, marked by open conflict with the State and the eventual arrest, torture, show-trial and imprisonment of the Primate. There could be no way for them to make compromises with the representatives of the party who had done these things and certainly not with Kádár, a high party and government official in the early days of the communist takeover, who in 1956 had betrayed the one group of communists and leftists around Imre Nagy that had had a chance to establish a democratic government in the country.

The basis groups proposed that the way to renew the Church was by the spread of small groups of close-knit communities of faithful patterned on the gatherings of early Christians, which were formed to protect them from the persecutions of the Roman Empire.

In order to understand the situation of the Catholic Church in Hungary today, one must not only understand the nature of the above conflict and the reasons for the various stands taken by its antagonists, but must be able to put these events into some sort of historical context. Since the Church has been in Hungary ever since the establishment of the first Hungarian State at the end of the 10th century its character and behaviour, its whole set of relationships to the society and to the people of the country were and are affected by its historical role. Although there is not space to outline more than a thousand years of Hungarian history here and to place the history of the Hungarian Church in that context, at least the main points of the most recent period can be sketched. This should lead to a better understanding not only of the conflict between the hierarchy and the basis groups, but also of the position of the Catholic Church in Hungary today.

For the purpose of this short overview, the most recent period of the Hungarian Church's history can be divided into two major parts: (A) the period after the Second World War, when Cardinal Mindszenty was the Primate of Hungary, and (B) the period of compromise with the State, beginning with the first agreement between the Kádár regime and the Vatican signed in 1964 and culminating, though by no means ending, with the appointment of László Lékai as the Archbishop and then Cardinal of Esztergom and consequently Mindszenty's successor as the Primate of Hungary.

Historical Background

A. *Cardinal Mindszenty's Years*

The ravages of the war and the sufferings of 1944 were followed by new abuses and injustices. Whereas the persecutions of the Nazis and their sympathisers were directed mainly at the Jews, the gypsies and the political Left, those that came after the war were more often aimed at the Catholic Church, and especially her hierarchy and her institutions. The victorious Red Army occupied Hungary and through the tiny communist party, most of whose members it had brought from Moscow, it began to take over total control of the country. Since the population had already had a taste of communism in 1919, it was none too eager to comply with Stalin's design that every East European country should become a part of the communist world. This reluctance made the final take-over even more ruthless.

With the destruction of the war and the unravelling of the traditional social and political institutions of the country, only the Catholic Church remained to defend a moral and philosophical system attacked by nihilistic and materialist political forces. The Protestant Churches were neither large enough nor as well organised and centralised, the Jewish community had been almost completely destroyed and the other religious groups were so much smaller and had so little power that they were no challenge to a highly-disciplined political party like that of the communists. As for the political parties formed after the war, none of them had a chance, since the only higher authority to whom they could appeal about irregularities and breaches in constitutional procedure was the Red Army High Command.

The Catholic Church presented the communists with a unique problem. Even the destruction of the war and the many hardships that it had brought did not destroy her structure. Her centralised hierarchy was hard to penetrate and to bring down from within, as had been done with the Protestant congregations. Most important of all, the Primate of the Hungarian Church, Cardinal József Mindszenty, was an uncompromising anti-communist with no illusions about the ulterior motives and designs of his opponents. As he wrote later in his memoirs:

> Especially when dealing with determined communists, a hesitant, irresolute attitude could prove disastrous. And I think to this hour that our position is so seriously weakened by those Christians whose primary concern seems to be worrying about whether the charges brought against the Church may not some time, some place have been justified. The excesses of modern "self-criticism" often serve only the interests of our bitter enemies. It takes people with carefully trained minds to see the "faults and weaknesses" of the Church in the proper proportions and to fit them into the circumstances of the times. Even a good many theologians and intellectuals cannot do that, for they lack the historian's eye.[1]

Such opposition did not deter the Stalinists, with Mátyás Rákosi, an intelligent, well-educated and ruthless man as their leader. Their strategy against Mindszenty and the Church was one of total frontal attack. They used every means at their disposal, and since by the end of 1948 they had effectively removed all of their weaker opponents from the political scene, the Church was a lonely and defenceless target. Cardinal Mindszenty used the pulpit, the foreign press, his acquaintances in the West and the few remaining public forums still available to him to answer the slanders and the false accusations levelled against him personally and against the Church, but he knew that he was fighting a losing battle.

Whatever historians may write about this period in the life of the Hungarian Church and whatever their judgement may be about the Cardinal's actions, no-one can question his resolve. In his memoirs, he naturally presents himself as firmer than may have been the case, but whatever his doubts and weaknesses were, he was one of the few who understood that the only way to fight the communists was not to betray even the slightest sign of weakness, since the success of their "politics" depended precisely on taking advantage of the least hesitation, the slightest willingness to compromise in the ranks of their opponents.

The destruction of the Church's power after the war began with the secularisation of 3,150 Catholic schools in 1948, extreme limitations placed on the small portion of the Catholic press and publishing which was allowed to stay in existence, the arrest, torture and conviction of Cardinal Mindszenty in 1949 and the eventual dissolution of all Catholic associations and lay organisations. In 1950, all religious orders except the four which were allowed to run eight remaining secondary schools (gymnasia) were dissolved and in the same year, after many thousands of members of these orders were arrested, the Council of Bishops was forced to sign an agreement with the government. That document in effect agreed to the total control of Hungary by the communists and even relinquished the ultimate control of the Church to this totalitarian system.

The two areas of religious influence in which the communists were able to achieve the most damage were in the destruction of religious instruction and in the infiltration of the clergy by priests under their control. The latter came to be known as "peace priests" for their active participation in the various "peace organisations" founded by the communists.

Beside the dissolution of the overwhelming majority of Catholic schools, the communists managed to sabotage the "optional religious instruction" guaranteed in the state schools by the constitution. The most prevalent method of accomplishing this end was the intimidation of parents by a variety of threats communicated to them either directly or indirectly at their places of employment or through their children. School principals and teachers were under pressure to discourage children from attending religious instruction, and the priests and the nuns who were usually the only teachers available for these courses were either arrested or scared away from their tasks by simple threats which no one could document or trace. As a result, the religious instruction in the schools was a remnant of what it would have been, had it been allowed to function freely. The little that was allowed to remain was left for propaganda purposes so that the regime could always point to "religious freedom under socialism".

The peace-priest movement was basically a form of the much used tactic of infiltration of all competing and opposing organisations and institutions. A few of the "progressive" priests were duped into cooperating with the communists, others were simply blackmailed, while still others were actively trained to infiltrate the priesthood and to "work their way up the ladder", naturally with plenty of help from the State.

Once the peace-priests were strategically placed in positions of influence and power, they could be used both as informers and as "enforcers" of the State's wishes in the ranks of the clergy and as "representatives of the progressive elements within the Church". No one can gauge the exact extent of their activities, especially not in the 1950s, since it was not and still is not in their interest or in the interest of the powers they serve that their identities be known.

The identities of members and officers of the peace-priest movement, especially those in leadership positions and the ones who have been regularly writing and working for the newspaper of the movement, have been known to the Hungarian hierarchy. A number of them, such as the canon Miklós Beresztócy, were excommunicated for collaboration with the Church's enemies.[2]

A period of total repression followed the 1950 "agreement" between the Church and the State. Many priests and unfrocked nuns, together with large numbers of the faithful, were imprisoned. The number who died is not definitely known, but it is certain that most if not all were cruelly tortured and mistreated and the physical and mental health of all was affected for the rest of their lives. Catholics, just like the members of other religious groups, were persecuted for their religious beliefs. They were denied positions in the jobs for which they were trained, refused union and other social benefits and were subject to special punishment if they betrayed the least sign of religious activity. The practice by priests of their religious duties anywhere except in churches, even their contact with the faithful, was considered an "act of treason" against the State.

In spite of, or maybe because of this persecution, many Catholics continued to attend church ceremonies and practised their religion. Some even made an effort to keep alive their religious beliefs through active study of the Bible and the catechism and they sent their children for private religious instruction to the homes of former priests and nuns, despite the danger. These practices contributed significantly to the survival of Catholicism through this period of persecution and ironically they also prepared the way for the conflicts between the hierarchy and the basis groups to be discussed later.

2. *The Fall of Stalinism and the Revolution*

With the demise of many Stalinists and the eventual dismissal of Rákosi, there began a period of relative easing of the repression in all areas of the country's life. The thaw culminated in the revolution of 1956, which was the most desperate attempt by any country up to that time to extricate itself from the Soviet empire and to reject the communist dictatorship imposed upon her. Following Stalin's death, Nikita Khrushchev's famous speech to the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, and the subsequent appointment of Imre Nagy as Hungary's premier in 1954, Catholic priests, nuns and laymen, along with many thousands of others, were released from prison. This did not mean freedom to practise religion as they had done right after the war, and certainly not as they had between the wars, but at least there was hope again that some semblance of religious freedom might one day be re-established.

As far as the Church was concerned, the process of reform and revolution culminated in the release from prison, by now modified to house arrest, of Cardinal Mindszenty on 1 November 1956.

The Cardinal made an impassioned speech to the nation over Radio Budapest on 3 November. In it he called for a continuation of the "beautiful days of unity" that had brought about the downfall of the Stalinist dictatorship and the elimination from power of most of its representatives. He also pleaded with the Soviet Union to avoid further bloodshed and to continue the withdrawal of its troops from Hungarian territory. At the time of his speech, there were many reports arriving from the north-eastern section of the country about increases in Soviet military strength there. Prime Minister Imre Nagy and some of his closest associates probably already feared the worst, which was only hours away.

Mindszenty's speech was conciliatory and lacked any criticism of Imre Nagy's government or even any harsh statements about the Stalinist persecutions of the recent past. It ended on a note which in subsequent years was misinterpreted and distorted to give the impression that he called for the re-establishment of Church property and thereby for the restoration of lands and wealth to their pre-Second World War owners. The crucial sentence of the speech was:

> We justly expect the immediate granting of freedom of Christian religious instruction and the restoration of the institutions and societies of the Catholic Church — among other things her press.[3]

Whatever interpretation one may want to attach to these words, it is hard to find in them anything about the restoration of church estates or other sources of revenue. The return of institutions and societies in a democratic country leaves the question of financial support and subsidy open. Only those who want to distort the meaning of these words could interpret them as the propagandists of the Kádár regime have done for the past 27 years. However, since the re-establishment of Soviet domination in Hungary, only the above interpretation and distortions were made available to the Hungarian population through the monopolised official press and the state-controlled publications.

The Cardinal sought asylum in the US embassy and another chapter began in the history of the Catholic Church in Hungary.

3. *The Years After 1956*

The defeat of Hungary's attempt to be free of totalitarian communism was followed by another period of terror. The most obvious candidates for punishment were the leaders of the revolution, already labelled a "counter-revolution" by the new "government" installed in power by the same Red Army that had paved the way for the "road to Socialism" after 1945.

Since the Catholic Church was merely a bystander at the events of the revolution, only those of her leaders who actively resisted the Kádár regime's moves to regain control of the Church's activities were involved in the retributions. Mindszenty was safe in the US embassy, and the bishops under the leadership of Archbishop József Grősz of Kalocsa were much more cautious and more willing to compromise with the regime than he had been. As a result, "good relations" developed between the Church and State, meaning just as in the fifties that the totalitarian system had succeeded in achieving a degree of control over the episcopate that it found sufficient for its purposes.

The victims of this new wave of terror were again the small, unknown representatives of Catholicism. Along with men and women of other faiths, those who had any role in organising groups and leading the resistance against the Soviet troops, or had played the least significant roles in positions of responsibility, were now singled out for punishment. Many were jailed, especially those clergy who had had some influence over groups of the faithful and who were not in positions of prominence. Those who had been imprisoned under Rákosi were automatically suspect and the least cause they may have given the newly reorganised police for suspicion was enough to return them to prison. Others not considered dangerous were simply relegated to the periphery of society where they had lived under the previous regime.

Since the Church continued to be without its leader, the new regime soon went to work on the Council of Bishops to try to get them to come to some sort of an "agreement". The "peace-priest" movement was revived and used much as it had been before to discredit the Church from within and to weaken her unity.

Although the methods of the Kádár regime in the first years of its power were as brutal as those of Rákosi, once the population, and especially the leaders of any resistance were cowed, Kádár set about to gain the "trust of the people" in a more subtle and in many ways a more insidious way than his Stalinist predecessors.

In 1963, a general amnesty was declared and most of the regime's political opponents who had been arrested and imprisoned after the revolution were set free. Kádár gambled that enough people had been worn down by six years of repression, and that without forums or institutions, and above all without the will to express their organised disapproval, they could not threaten the hegemony of the Party. Now the task was actually to convince the population that through a process of compromise, a relatively good life could be provided for the country even under Soviet domination. In order to sell this idea, the regime had to provide some genuine opportunities which had not existed previously. Therefore a set of economic theories was devised under the name of the New Economic Mechanism, a certain measure of free enterprise was introduced into the economy and the wide-ranging system of illegal work and business, known as the "second economy" was tolerated. Since people were allowed to use their resourcefulness, those who were industrious and adroit at handling the complex system of laws, corruption and personal influence did well. The majority of working men and women, although living better than in the fifties, expended enormous amounts of energy but barely managed to make a decent living.

In this situation, the Church also decided in favour of some form of accommodation with the regime. Since the international atmosphere had also changed and the confrontations of the Cold War were being replaced by efforts at co-existence and détente even the Vatican was pressurising the Church to make compromises with the State. Many church leaders, having seen the disastrous effects of Stalinist repression on their influence, and witnessing the decline in religious interest among an ever-growing segment of society, especially the young, sought to save as much as possible by reaching an agreement with the State. But there remained an adamant group within the Church, especially the Cardinal in the American embassy, which opposed any such moves. He had no influence over the events in the life of the Hungarian Church, and those who shared his views in the upper hierarchy had either been already removed by the State or were now quietly shunted aside by the members of the episcopate favouring compromise. Since the latter group enjoyed the increasing support of the Vatican, the staunch opponents of communism in all its forms found themselves in conflict with their superiors, whom they were bound to obey according to their priestly oaths. The choice between open conflict with the Holy See and acquiescence resulted in withdrawal into quiet personal opposition and only in rare instances in open or even veiled challenge to the authority of both the State and the Vatican.

There were a series of smaller compromises between the hierarchy and the State, the first of which established in 1957 the Catholic National Peace Commission, an organisation which not only gave prominent roles to the "peace-priests", but which was now supported by the Council of Bishops, who hoped that in this way they could protect the right of the faithful to religious instruction in the schools. Other compromises included the acquiescence of the church hierarchy in the removal and internment of bishops who adamantly opposed the regime and the appointment to positions of authority of members of the clergy known for their willingness to cooperate with the government. Soon, the "peace-priests" had re-established enough of their power for the government to feel less threatened by the hierarchy. In return for these concessions, the Church received little of what it had hoped for.

The old regulations concerning optional religious instruction in the schools were revived. It was just as hard, if not harder, for parents to register their children as before and every administrative measure was taken to discourage them from doing so. Private religious instruction was again made illegal, while the bishops were allowed to appoint religious teachers only with the consent of the government, which could rescind the certification of these teachers at any time. They were allowed to stay in the school building only for the duration of the lesson and were forbidden to have any contact with the students after school hours. All religious books, especially those used in the schools, had to be approved by the government.[4]

B. *Cardinal Lékai's Years*

4. *The Period of Compromise*

When the regime was in total control, it showed a willingness to compromise with the Church. The first major agreement between the Vatican and the Hungarian government was signed on 15 October 1964. At the time, Monsignor Casaroli, who represented the Holy See, characterised the agreement as "neither a *modus vivendi* nor an accord". It had simply achieved "practical solutions in some matters", without providing any "legal clarifications" of the existing difficulties.[5]

Indeed, the agreement was extremely limited and amounted to not much more than a recognition of one another by the Vatican and the Hungarian government. After almost twenty years without contact, a period in which "agreements" of the type forced on the Hungarian Church in 1950 were considered null and void by the Holy See, when Vatican appointments existed only on paper but could not be implemented because of the Hungarian State's refusal to consent, there had now been some real negotiations and the following points were agreed upon:

(1) Certain episcopal appointments were accepted by both sides;

(2) The oath of allegiance to the constitution and the laws of the Hungarian People's Republic, which had to be taken by certain persons holding church office, was to be considered binding by the Church, but only in so far as these laws did not contradict the principles of the Christian faith;

(3) The Hungarian Papal Institute in Rome was to be administered by priests acceptable to the Hungarian government. In return, the government guaranteed that the Institute's activities would not be disrupted, and that every year, each Hungarian diocese would be allowed to send a young priest there.[6]

A protocol was also signed in which unresolved questions and the standpoint of the two sides on these were included.

From the point of view of the Church, the filling of the episcopal vacancies with at least a few individuals acceptable to the Vatican was of major importance. Before the agreement only seven of Hungary's bishops were allowed to exercise the duties of their offices and six of the country's dioceses no longer had bishops. But this step in the direction of solving the problems of leadership in the Hungarian Church was only a small beginning, looked at from the point of view of the situation of the Church in the country. According to a set of statistics provided to the then First Secretary of the United Nations, U Thant, in 1963 and published in 1965, the numbers alone provide a sad picture of the Church if they are compared with the corresponding ones for 1945.

The Situation of the Church in Terms of Figures for 1945 and 1965[7]

	1945	1965
Diocesan and Religious Order Priests	ca. 6,900	4,500
Orders — Men	18	3
Women	39	1
Religious Houses — Men	187	6
Women	456	2
Religious Men	2,459	1,400*
Women	7,525	
Seminaries	30	6
Theology Students (annually)	994	ca. 300
Church Schools	3,163	—
Church High Schools (Gymnasias)	49	8
Catholic Legal Academies	1	—
Catholic Pedagogical Institutions	32	—
Catholic Boarding Schools	167	8
Catholic Hospitals	9	—
Catholic Association Buildings	200	—
Catholic Newspapers and Journals	68	4
Catholic Publishing Companies	50	2
Catholic Printing Companies	20	—
Catholic Lay Organisations and Associations	ca. 4,000	1

*Not all of whom live in religious houses

Besides the above facts and the effective crippling of the church leadership, there were a number of other facts showing to what extent the communists had succeeded in weakening the Church.

Contacts with the Vatican had been cut to a minimum, with only two bishops allowed to attend Council meetings in 1962, five in 1963 and nine in 1964. In each case, the bishops were kept under surveillance by state agents, usually peace-priests or representatives of the state Office for Church Affairs. This agency controls all the activities of the Church and the clergy, including the right of the latter to say Mass and to preach. In 1962 and 1963, for example, permission to perform priestly duties was revoked from a total of 225 priests. The total number excluded from pastoral activities, including those from religious orders, in 1965 stood at one thousand, almost one fifth of the priests in the country at the time.

Another source provides some later estimates about the numbers of Catholics in Hungary.[8] At the end of the war, in 1945, there were 7,200,000; by 1980 this number had dropped to five million. Both were roughly out of a total population of around ten million. Those who "somehow considered themselves as belonging to the Church" in 1980 numbered around three million, while only twenty per cent of the faithful, that is, roughly one million people, actually went to church and could be considered as "practising Catholics in some form".

In other areas as well, the Church's activities were hindered or extremely limited. The most important example of these was religious instruction, which, although guaranteed by the constitution and the "agreement" of 1950, was hindered at every turn by the State. For example, the registration for such instruction had to be done on one particular day, at a certain time. If the number of registrants did not reach one tenth of all the students in the school, the classes could not be held. But even more sinister and obviously much harder to monitor were the unofficial, informal methods of intimidation. Parents whose children attended religious instruction might have problems at their place of employment. The children themselves were often reprimanded and ridiculed for attending such classes, and the principal of the school made every effort to discourage the parents even before they registered their children. Since the "materialist philosophy" was the basis of all instruction, even the most well-intentioned teachers were forced to teach their subjects in a spirit totally antagonistic to all forms of religious belief.

In other areas of life, such as marriage, divorce, child-bearing, contraception and abortion, the State nurtured attitudes directly opposed to the teachings of the Church. Ironically, many of these policies resulted in drastic changes in the behaviour of the population, leading to eventual revisions of government policies out of sheer social and political expediency. One glaring example was the sudden drop in the birth rate in the early sixties, which caused a national outcry, with many intellectuals warning about the eventual dying out of the population.

The next important event in the life of the Hungarian Church was the departure of Cardinal Mindszenty from the US Embassy and his exile from the country. With his departure, a critical era in the life of the Catholic Church came to an end. He was not only the unbending, uncompromising leader of his flock who was willing to suffer torture and imprisonment for his faith, but had become a symbol throughout the world of the struggle against totalitarian systems in all their forms. His removal from the scene was a more important change than any other wrought by decades of persecution. Though it would be hard to establish causal relationships between this event and the spread of the basis groups and small communities to be discussed in more detail further on, the essence of the Cardinal's attitude toward communism, his unswerving opposition to all compromise with the representatives of the totalitarian State, and his insistence on the ideals and the spiritual values of Christianity above all political and temporal expediency are too similar to the attitudes and the ideals of these groups to be considered merely chance correspondences.

The fact that the State viewed the Cardinal's departure as an immense victory is significant. Though his presence may have been forgotten by many Hungarians, it could never be forgotten by world public opinion or political leaders. As long as he was in the US Embassy in Budapest, the "easing of tensions" between the US and the USSR could not proceed unhampered. Certainly, Kádár's role in the suppression of the revolution of 1956 could never be as lightly dismissed with the Cardinal confined to the embassy only a few miles away from the Hungarian Socialist Workers' (Communist) Party headquarters, as when he was across the border in Vienna, or better still, visiting Hungarian émigrés in North or South America. Just as important to the Kádár regime as the removal of this living reminder of the revolution was the acceptance by the Vatican of the principle of compromise with the communist state. Now that compromise and "mutual cooperation in the resolution of problems" between the Church and the State replaced open confrontation and mistrust, the goals of the State were much closer to being realised.

As a continuation of the dialogue between the Vatican and the Hungarian government which began with the 1964 agreement, and as a result of the negotiations which included those preceding Cardinal Mindszenty's departure from Hungary, after his death in May 1975, László Lékai was appointed Archbishop of Esztergom on 12 February 1976. He took the oath of allegiance to the Hungarian Constitution three days later.

The appointment of a new primate came just over a year after changes made by the Holy See in the Hungarian Episcopate. These included the appointment of five new bishops and other changes in nine of the country's eleven dioceses. Thus, certainly from the point of view of the Vatican and the Hungarian Council of Bishops, the leadership of the Church had been clarified and the filling of many vacant posts had opened the way to improvements in the administration of the Church's affairs. As for the attitudes and ideas of this new leadership, much could be learned from statements Archbishop Lékai made in an interview with the Hungarian News Agency (MTI) on the day that he swore allegiance to the Hungarian Constitution.[9]

The new Primate tried to be as even-handed as possible in his comments about the State, without giving up his advocacy of the Church's claims. He adhered to the positions taken by the Holy See, especially in the field of international affairs. The following quotes characterise the new archbishop's views on the relations between Church and State:

> The realities of the situation are that in our present socialist society believers and non-believers must live together. We believers keep watch over our religious outlook on the world as a precious and holy value, our greatest treasure. This gives us the strength to carry out our everyday work. Although the people of Hungary are not united as far as their fundamental beliefs are concerned, fresh evidence accumulates every day that harmony can be achieved on matters that concern the interests of our country if we concentrate on what binds us together and not on what separates us.

As to the allegiance of the faithful to their country and to their religious principles, the primate said:

> I can hardly thank and appreciate highly enough the realistic policies of the Holy See. The grinding pressure of earlier times has ceased, and the souls of the bishops and the faithful have received a sense of reassurance and calm, thanks to which we can now serve both our faith and our country in a harmonious way.[10]

Based on these and on subsequent statements, the new Archbishop of Esztergom certainly met the requirements of both the State and the Vatican. He would be a man of compromise and "realism", whose chief goal was to be the preservation of the Church and the achievement of some progress even at the expense of formally relinquishing a degree of control. There were many in the hierarchy and the Church who approved of these policies, but what neither the archbishop nor the Vatican estimated correctly was that there was also a strong opposition to this path of compromise and agreement within the Hungarian Church. The members of this opposition had not achieved much recognition at the time of Lékai's appointment, but not long afterwards their activities and their positions received publicity.

The problem of the basis groups or small communities was raised as early as the 1976 winter session of the Council of Bishops. The official report of the meeting expressed the bishops' concern that these groups might become divorced from their local churches and the community of the worldwide Church and turn into religious sects. Although that legitimate concern was certainly shared by the Vatican, what the bishops did not, and could not, say was how much of their concern stemmed from the fear that the State would not tolerate the existence of these groups and would hold the hierarchy responsible for curbing any signs of independence within the Church, lest "the spirit of compromise" between the Church and the State be jeopardised. Ironically, whether they in fact were acting in fear of the State or even under the direct orders of the state Office for Religious Affairs, or were issuing these admonitions strictly on their own initiative, everyone not privy to their consultations, which certainly included all the members of the basis groups, tended to believe the former.

The Conflict Between The Basis Groups and the Church Hierarchy

In order to understand the nature of the conflict between the basis groups or small communities and the church hierarchy in Hungary, it is necessary to investigate the positions of 1) the hierarchy; 2) the basis groups; and 3) the Holy See. After an analysis of these, one particular proposal for a resolution of the conflict will be described.

1. *The Position of the Hierarchy*

As has been indicated above, with the appointment of Archbishop, subsequently Cardinal Lékai, the Vatican's policy of pursuing a path of compromise with the Hungarian State was affirmed. He was chosen precisely because he was willing to carry out such a policy and his choice was already a part of the process of compromise. One of the most articulate and shrewd formulators of this policy of compromise with the State over the years and especially since 1976, the year of Lékai's appointment, has been József Cserháti, the bishop of the southern city of Pécs. In a series of articles in *Vigilia,* the monthly of the Hungarian Catholic Action Organisation, he has presented some of his ideas about compromise.[11]

In one of these, he analyses the effects of secularisation on the Church in general and the Hungarian Church in particular. He argues that either she adapts to this secularisation process, or she risks losing an even greater number of her followers. In a more abstract sense, but still in this connection, he writes that rather than striving for an impossible ideal of freedom, religious and otherwise, the Church ahd her members should live with the relatively greater freedoms of the post-1964 era and expand the limits of these whenever and wherever possible. He writes that this relative freedom is "guaranteed by the State and within this freedom is contained everything that belongs to the apostolic and the spiritual leadership responsibilities that are derived from the essence of the gospels". The framework in which the Church must practise its duties "is the possibility provided by the new socialist lifestyle and the behavioural forms within which the activity of the Church and the acts of faith of the faithful are *a priori* forced to reach certain accommodations."

Another member of the clergy, András Szennay, who is well-versed in theology and holds the important position of abbot of the Benedictine teaching monastery at Pannonhalma, as well as many other posts as an editor and administrator of church organisations, wrote an article describing the significance of the basis communities and attempting to define their role in the Church.[12] He begins by presenting some historical background about the precedents for such communities in the early life of the Church and the theological basis for their encouragement, especially after the Second Vatican Council. Then he proceeds to outline some practical consequences in the life of the modern Church. In this section, he alludes to the danger of the small communities breaking away from the main body of the Church and mentions what he calls the "benign tension" that exists between the church leadership and these communities. He defines them as the "peculiar utopia" of the Church, since a "constant but unrealisable goal of the Church is the creation of community life". He ends his general and theoretical comments with a discussion of the dangers involved in the formation of these communities, especially the one that "they begin to 'organise' or they group around one leader or another and begin to obey him blindly" and thereby lose their "identity as a community". If they follow this path then sooner or later they themselves become institutionalised and form a "church within a church, that is they enter on the road toward becoming sects". He warns against a movement in which the weaker are swept along by the more independent and powerful. "In the case of such groups, we can hardly speak of a community suffused by the spirit of Christ." He warns that "no small community can expropriate the gospels of Jesus. No community and no faithful Catholic can do anything but pray daily for the coming of the 'kingdom' and be a signal towards this future kingdom." The irony in this last sentence is that in this context the Hungarian word for "kingdom" and "country" are interchangeable, so that the biblical words can be interpreted in a secular sense. The coming of the "kingdom" could also mean the coming of a truly free and independent country.

Aside from these more general and theoretical standpoints of the Church, especially in the last few years, there have been specific points of disagreement with at least some of the basis groups. In particular, the pacifism of the groups under the leadership of the Piarist priest György Bulányi have placed the church leadership in an awkward position.

This is an area where religion and politics overlap and the State's policies have to be taken into consideration. As far as the Hungarian State is concerned, because of its fealty to Moscow, it cannot tolerate any "independent peace movement" and certainly no pacifists. The intense communist propaganda for peace and disarmament has always been directed at the West. Disarmament in the East cannot even be mentioned while the West has weapons and while it can defend itself. Therefore the appearance of any group that objects to active military service and that asks to be allowed to perform civilian duties instead poses a threat to the State's domestic anti-pacifist policies. Ironically, there is a small group of Nazarene Christians in Hungary with whom the State has come to a quiet agreement about substitute military service, but their example was certainly not meant to be followed by Catholics. If even a small group of the largest religious community is given the right of alternative military service, the spectre of mass requests for it arises in a country where few believe that the military serves to protect the interests of Hungarians.

So it is not hard to imagine the pressure that must have been exerted on the church leadership by the government through its state Office for Religious Affairs ever since the followers of Father Bulányi began to refuse active military service and chose imprisonment and punishment instead. There were enough indications in the press of the pressure being applied. These often came from Imre Miklós, the head of the state Office for Religious Affairs.[13]

It is hard to imagine under present political circumstances what the hierarchy could have done besides come out in "support of the country's laws", especially since they are bound to do so by oath. Objections have been voiced more against the form and the style in which the Cardinal chose to make a personal stand in the matter.

In a speech on 6 September 1981, at the 125th anniversary of the consecration of the Cathedral of Esztergom, after a lengthy listing of historical precedents in which Hungarians were forced to defend their country, their kingdom and themselves, he said:

> As primate of this country, I see with concern that some priests and believers who are inclined to exaggerate urge our sons of conscription age to refuse military service. They do so by referring to the gospel and the teachings of the Church in order to persuade our youth to say "no" to military service, as if such an attitude followed directly from their Catholic faith. We hear with consternation that there are some who obey this prodding.

In a general warning to the basis groups, the Cardinal said that although there was peace in the Church,

> there are some people, both priests and believers, who think that they have received special instructions and gifts from the Holy Ghost, in contrast to the ancient teachings and the existing discipline of the Church. Such people cause uneasiness in the lives of the faithful [. . .] Those who would like to turn you against your bishops and undermine the added spiritual authority of ordained priests, destroy the gospel of Christ.[14]

Here it is necessary to interject some detail about the steps which the hierarchy has taken against the basis groups in the last few years. Some priests active with these groups have been suspended from performing their duties. One of these was a follower of Bulányi from Budapest by the name of László Kovács. The reasons for the action taken against him were officially announced in the communiqué released at the end of the autumn session of the Council of Bishops, held on 6-7 October 1981:[14] 1) For years he has been making statements in his sermons that were contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church; 2) he voiced "unjust" criticism of the church hierarchy at a youth rally held in the village of Hajós in Bács-Kiskun county; 3) his sermons were often directed against compulsory military service. These points were officially announced in the communiqué released at the end of the autumn session of the Council of Bishops, held on 6 October 1981.[15]

Another priest, András Gromon from Székesfehérvár, was suspended at the end of October of the same year, "in order to avoid a scandal", as the bishop of the diocese, Imre Kisberk, put it.

Finally, Father Bulányi was also placed on *suspensio a divinis*, one of the strictest forms of punishment for a priest under canon law. The suspension followed a meeting between Bulányi and Lékai attended by four professors of theology who had prepared written summaries of the objections against the views of the basis communities in question. Bulányi also wrote a written summary of his position and sent it to the Cardinal. These answers were examined by the four professors and he was called to another meeting with them, where they pointed out the contradictions that they saw between his writings and the tenets of the Church's "teaching office".

The disagreements between the hierarchy and Bulányi's followers were exacerbated when one of the mimeographed publications of the basis groups appeared, containing views on subordination that contradicted the teachings of the Church. Bulányi was mentioned as the author of the article but he denied this allegation. Speculations by members of his groups and their sympathisers as to the identity of the author have not apparently been fruitful.

After the 9-10 March 1982 conference of the Council of Bishops, an ominous warning was issued to Father Bulányi and his followers, accusing them of "spreading mistaken teachings about the faith" and of wanting to introduce a new church discipline among their groups. Father Bulányi was called upon to recant his erroneous theological views and to report on the ways in which he wished to bring his teachings into line with those of the Church.

According to an article in the Catholic weekly *Új Ember* of 4 April 1982, the Church's objections to his teachings can be summed up as follows:

1. His identification of the inner voice that he hears "as one of God's souls" as revelations of the Holy Spirit;
2. His statements about the Epistles of St Paul, which he considers to be "secondary writings", especially as these relate to the power of the Church, obedience and excommunication;
3. His insistence that in the Church of Christ, the *believers* "grant office and priesthood". Leadership does not follow from ordination, but from the close adherence of the Church's leaders to the teachings of Christ. Ordination is only a consequence and requires that the ordained safeguard what Christ taught his own small community;
4. Bulányi's train of thought on "obedience and disobedience" is completely arbitrary. "He asserts that obedience is a sin, while disobedience is a virtue." He supports his standpoint by quoting Christ's sayings out of context, and thereby attempting to refute St Paul.

According to one well-informed analyst of the situation of the Hungarian Catholic Church,[16] the event which probably triggered Bulányi's suspension may have been the Cardinal's unwillingness to allow him to concelebrate Holy Mass with him at a traditional gathering of young Christians at the Danube village resort of Nagymaros. In protest against the Cardinal's action, a large but disputed number of people left the church and went to pray in its garden under Bulányi's leadership. This open split could not be tolerated, lest further demonstrations and large-scale challenges to the authority of the Church were to follow. And as the above-mentioned analyst hints, no-one can accurately measure the degree of state participation in the affair. However, it is a safe guess that the hierarchy has been under some pressure for the past years, and especially since 1979, to do something about disciplining Bulányi's pacifist followers. The year is significant, because, according to a letter by Bulányi himself, eight Hungarian Catholics had refused active military service since then, four of whom were still imprisoned at the time of writing.[17] The State, whose leaders must themselves answer to a higher though still temporal authority, much prefers to let the episcopate stifle its unruly faithful itself, rather than having to punish them with stiff prison sentences and thereby invite criticism.

2. *The Position of the Basis Groups*

A. General Comments

Whereas the hierarchy has chosen a path of accommodation, their critics within the Church, the basis groups, have rejected the authority of the State in religious matters and have insisted on a strict interpretation of the teachings of Christ. Such an uncompromising stand has been extremely hard to adhere to in Hungary, since the Kádár regime has played a sophisticated political game with society and with the Church, making it difficult for any group to reject the unwritten compromises between the State and a majority of the population. To do so not only leads to losing material advantages, but gains little support or sympathy from the rest of society.

On the other hand, the need for some sort of group structure and community is so great in Hungary that its absence is felt in all areas of society. In a recent essay, a sociologist wrote a detailed analysis of the fate of communities and their organisations under the communist totalitarian State. He pointed out, without any particular effort to hide the object of his reproach, that since the imposition of communist rule and the dissolution of all but Communist Party-controlled organisations, clubs and societies, there has been a breakdown in the sense of community in the country. So much so, that an every-man-for-himself attitude has led to a disregard for the needs of others and a consuming desire for materialistic advantages and personal gain.[18]

The rise and the influence of the basis groups, numbering approximately 100,[19] in the Hungarian Catholic Church today can be traced back to this destruction of independent communities. In some ways the need for this type of community organisation existed even before the war, but the situation was intensified when the communists gained total control of society.

B. Summary of Recent History and Sources

The recent history and the sources of the basis groups are best summarised on the basis of a dissertation by János Wildmann.[20]

One of the principal sources for the membership of the small communities was the extensive organisation and the wide influence among the young of KALOT, an acronym for the Hungarian equivalent of "The National Association of Young Agrarian Men's Unions". Its membership numbered half a million before the war and its leader, Father Kerkai, ran into problems with the Hungarian hierarchy because of a plan he drew up for general agrarian reform. Although at first Pope Pius XII supported Father Kerkai in his work, later he aligned the Holy See's policies more with those of the Hungarian bishops.

The communist-led People's Front dissolved the organisation soon after 1945, thereby indicating the influence that it still enjoyed and the political threat that it posed after the war. Many of the priests and the laymen active in KALOT continued to work with small groups of people after its dissolution. Although they gave up a large part of their cultural, political and organisational goals during the years of the Church's open persecution, they continued their "efforts towards religious renewal. Furthermore, they managed to preserve the means and methods of the movement in secret, for example by conducting readings of the Bible, using religious exercises and other instructional techniques."[21]

The second major source in modern times of the development of the basis groups can be traced back to the dissolution and the persecution of the various orders of priests and nuns and the general mistreatment of the Catholic faithful. At the time of the dissolution of the orders and the mass arrests of these and other clergy and after the signing of the church-state "agreement" in 1950, those members of the clergy and faithful who were not in prison were forced to rely on their friends and their families for support and in a certain sense for protection. As a result, many small "family churches" sprang up. Religious teaching and group prayer along with more secular activities developed naturally in such "families". Especially when they included teaching priests or nuns, it was possible for these small groups to receive both religious instruction and other types of education based on a religious outlook. Since even the sham of "optional religious instruction" in the regular schools was not adhered to, many parents who insisted on providing their children with some religious training eventually found their way to these clerics living within the confines of their "family churches".

The period of persecution and harassment brought with it a break between the hierarchy and the more active predecessors of what came to be known as basis groups or small communities. The imprisoned and the persecuted felt betrayed and abandoned by the hierarchy, especially after Mindszenty's show trial and imprisonment and the 1950 "agreement". Those who persevered through the period of religious persecution resented the hierarchy's ineffectiveness in protecting them. They saw the breaking of the power of the Church and her eventual submission to government control as a return to the alliance between the Church and State of the pre-war years, made worse by the fact that this time the State was far more repressive and avowedly anti-religious.

After the brief period of hope in 1956, the totalitarian State was re-established and these firmly religious groups faced the hostility of officials bent on eradicating the last vestiges of their view of life and the world. The hierarchy again succumbed to superior power and thus new seeds for the conflict within the Church were sown.

Following 1963 and the general amnesty for those who had been imprisoned in 1956 and 1957, Kádár began his tactics of "compromise". Now the released prisoners and those who had to practise their faith surreptitiously went through another long and arduous process of achieving some degree of religious freedom. The speed of the "gains" did not keep up with "liberalisation" in the economy and to a smaller extent in social life.

Many of the opportunities that these groups gained were a result of the agreements between the Church and State signed in 1965 and afterwards. But as with most persecuted people, there were those for whom these improvements did not suffice. A period of six years in prison, torture, humiliation and continued ostracism seldom leaves a person ready to make compromises with those who were directly responsible for this treatment. Thus many of the basis groups, following a theologically "purer" path, at least in their view, defied the government and the hierarchy either in the hope of achieving more of their religious goals now, or of laying the groundwork for the future.

C. Types of Basis Groups

The basis groups can be divided into four main types.[22] The "Regnumists" are named after a movement of priests and laymen called "Regnum Marianum" which was active in the pre-war years and which consisted of a religious organisation that emphasised community life. Their main tasks and goals are the religious education of young people, the renewal and the spread of the faith and the establishment of an "active group of God's people". Their programme consists of the teaching of the catechism, in particular reinforced by the use of a successful book written by a group of their priests called *Hitünk és életünk* (Our Faith and Our Life), which won a competition for catechism books and has been published by one of the two church publishing houses in Hungary. It is important to point out that they are careful to nurture good relations with the hierarchy and have purposely never written anything critical of them even in the informal publications circulating among Hungarian Catholics.

As far as the structure of the "Regnumists" is concerned, according to Wildmann, they are led mainly by priests, and only in some cases by laymen: "a large number of the better trained and activist priests belong to this group." They form a "democratised Church from above" that nevertheless has a pyramidal structure.

Some of the characteristics of these groups include: an adherence to the model of the "nouvelle chrétienne" conservative theology; a certain kind of clericalism based more on knowledge and training rather than control of the priests; a balance between knowledge and life; emphasis on the importance of relations with the official Church, both in a tactical and an ecclesiastical sense; the inclusion of "charismata", that is, the extraordinary powers of healing and insight bestowed by the Holy Spirit, under the authority and within the order of the Church; and finally, a general openness to the world and active support for ecumenism.

The largest group among the small communities, the "Regnumists" have safeguarded themselves from the machinations of the State by their strict adherence to the official Church and its rules and decisions, and by their diplomatic stance even in matters of compromise with the State. Most of the leadership and many of the members of the Regnumist groups have at one time or another been arrested or otherwise intimidated by the authorities, mainly before 1965. Since then, as long as they have adhered to the principle of no open conflict with the church leadership, they have not suffered from such measures.

Probably the best known groups are those who follow the Piarist[23] priest, Father György Bulányi. After the nationalisation of the Catholic schools in 1948, he worked as a religious instructor for students and was called upon by Rome to organise exercises for small groups of people along with other priests and the members of other dissolved orders. In 1952 he was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment. Although released at the time of the revolution in 1956, he did not flee to the West. Rearrested after the defeat of the revolution, he was released under an amnesty in 1960. Since the bishops were prevented by the State from assigning him to the care of the faithful, he became an unskilled labourer and worked with small groups of Catholics in his free time.

Bulányi's followers are well organised and serve the sick and the poor. They are radical followers of Jesus whose goal is to live and study together according to a set of common principles. Their programme consists of the "concretisation of evangelical questions". Under the strong central leadership of Father Bulányi, they are firmly integrated but democratic within their groups. They choose to live by the standard of "an intensive life" both in the service of Christ and of their fellow men.

Their other characteristics include: orthodox Christian practices; a belief in the principle of non-violence; a critical relationship to the official Church, but only on ecclesiastical grounds; the inclusion of "charismata" in the order of the groups; and isolation from the world.

Since these groups believe in and practise non-violence, and a number of their members have refused active military service since 1979, they have run into the most open conflict with the State and with the church leadership, whom the former has used to carry out its wishes in the last decade and a half. Thus, Bulányi's followers have little chance for the type of quiet activity that characterises the Regnumists, precisely because they have chosen this path of confrontation with the State and with the Church. Their type of "insubordination" is exactly what a totalitarian

State cannot tolerate.

The Church, on the other hand, having already applied one of its strictest forms of disciplinary punishment, *suspensio a divinis,* to Bulányi, is now awaiting the decision of the Holy See as to how to treat a priest who will not submit to her authority in a matter which he considers more of a state than an ecclesiastical or theological affair. The State, on the other hand, will have fewer misgivings about using its power, and if it feels that its political power is sufficiently threatened may again resort to imprisoning Fr Bulányi on a charge of refusing to carry out the laws of the land.

An important aspect of Bulányi's programme is its emphasis on matters of such grave national concern as the population decline, abortion, divorce and alcoholism.[24] Besides their pacifism, which they identify as one part of their "service of life", they reject the national preoccupation with improving the standard of living, to the extent that they urge their followers to let the father earn each family's livelihood, while the mother stays at home with the children, and to have as many children as possible. It must be understood in this connection that in Hungary today, even a small family living on the relatively good income of the father would be relegated to financial conditions unacceptable to the majority of working men and women in the West.

The importance of these parts of Bulányi's programme is that by concerning themselves with such social matters, his followers may attract the attention of segments of the population who are not interested only in religious problems, and even the smallest stirrings of the social conscience could provide the government with a pretext to move against them for "political incitement".

The other two groups of basis communities are smaller and their influence is more limited. They consist of the charismatics and the independent groups, both of whom adhere to the leadership of their local pastors, though they live somewhat unorthodox religious lives in small communities. The charismatics share many of the characteristics of their brethren in other parts of the world, with their emphasis on charismatic renewal and the bestowal of the various gifts of the spirit. They are communities structured around the idea of the "charismata", the extraordinary powers bestowed by the Holy Spirit, and their most important principle is the search for each individual's own charisma. Some further characteristics of this group include: readiness for sacrifice: *diakonia,* i.e. service (from the Greek, *diakonos,* literally, servant); and acceptance of the larger Church and the hierarchy.

The independent groups live intensely religious lives and their programme consists of religious answers to existential questions. They are led by priests and laymen and their structure consists of groupings of friends under one leader. They are well integrated and they take part in the activities of the group at least passively. They have few conflicts with the hierarchy and accept the organisation of the Church as it exists, with the hierarchy at its head.

3. *The Position of the Holy See*

The Vatican, because it is after all responsible for the Church as a whole, cannot make the type of unequivocal decisions that the two sides to the dispute in the Hungarian Church may wish for. Rather, it is forced, as it was after the 1982 *ad limina* visit of the Hungarian bishops to Rome, to make statements that satisfy neither side completely and ultimately leave it up to them either to interpret the words of the Pope and the stand of the Vatican in a spirit of understanding or to use these merely to fuel their conflicts even further.

During his address to the Hungarian bishops on their visit to Rome between 1 to 11 October 1982, the Pope said only a few words about the problem of the basis groups. He urged that they should work "above all in firm unity with their local churches and through them with the Church as a whole, always in union with their bishops and acting under their direction."[25] In order not to make his statement too one-sided in the support of the hierarchy, he also urged the bishops to support and encourage those groups that met the above requirements.

In the matter of Bulányi's suspension, the Vatican's decision has been again as even-handed as possible. In May 1983, the Holy See published a report about this case. It contained no condemnation of Father Bulányi or his writings, but it did criticise his followers for being "disobedient".[26] Thus the Vatican has continued along its path of compromise, attempting to mollify both the basis groups and the hierarchy, not to mention the Kádár regime, which has recently given signs that it might be willing to relent in the matter of religious education in the schools.

Unfortunately, this decision, just as other actions before it, has done little to improve the situation within the Catholic Church in Hungary. Unless the Holy See finds some way to effect a reconciliation behind the scenes, the problems promise to multiply. The fact that John Paul II comes from Poland allows one to assume both that he is more familiar with the problems of the Church in Eastern Europe than his predecessors and to hope that, if anyone can, he will find some way to reconcile the Church and the basis groups in Hungary.

4. *Possibilities for Resolving the Differences between the Church and the Basis Groups*

Last year, in the third issue of a Hungarian *samizdat* publication,[27] some ways in which the conflict between the hierarchy and Bulányi and his followers may be resolved were proposed. The author, Csaba Kelemen, was presumably a priest or possibly even a member of one of the basis groups. He writes that both sides in the dispute believe that their stance is theologically sound. The pacifist groups say that opposition to military service should be carried out to the extent of "accepting even the legal consequences", in other words, going to gaol. The hierarchy, on the other hand, says that such a refusal conflicts with the teachings of the Church. The author points out that since there is no specific reference to the matter in the Bible, none that could be used as the basis for a dogma, the answer to the theological question of whether or not the Gospels support the refusal of military service has to be sought in the "spirit" of Jesus's teachings, "in the light of the teachings of the Gospels as a whole".

Kelemen summarises the "basic principles" of the two sides as follows:

A. The Hungarian hierarchy
   1. We must accept reality and satisfy the State's demands;
   2. We will not be able to achieve more than we already have in exchange for our acquiescence;
   3. Under the present circumstances, the Church can at least function on an "operational" level.

B. The Basis Groups (under Bulányi)
   1. Our relationship to reality is not a part of reality. Therefore, it *is* possible to approach our circumstances critically;
   2. The Church has made concessions to the State that it should not have made. Consequently, having lost its prestige, the hierarchy's influence has decreased;
   3. The concessions that the State has made are mere formalities which did not substantially alter the situation of the Church in Hungary.

Kelemen argues that it is the totalitarian State which creates the situation in which the two sides take such irreconcilable stands. He writes: "The totalitarian State forces its will on everyone who wants to exist under its rule."

Attempting to come up with some sort of a compromise acceptable to both sides, he mentions two important prerequisites. One is that the Church has to accept the fact that it cannot always find suitable answers to all questions. Thus, if a problem has no solution that could be included in the catechism it is in the interest of the Church to accept this fact. The other fact, which the basis groups should accept, is that pluralism can have only a temporary and relative role in the Church's teachings since the "objective facts are always the same". In order to achieve a definite theological solution, "we must accept the pluralism of views temporarily, along with all the inconveniences that that implies."

Finally, Kelemen suggests that both sides specify those concrete steps that could be taken to improve their ever-worsening relationship. He says that the position taken in the 79th article of the Papal Encyclical *Gaudium* *et Spes* should be taken as a point of departure: "It seems only fair that the law should be tolerant toward those who do not want to carry weapons for reasons of conscience, but who are willing to serve the human community in peaceful ways."

According to Kelemen, the hierarchy could maintain its position that the Gospels do not prohibit service in the armed forces, but at the same time could accept the fact that there are Catholics who do not interpret the teachings of the Gospels in this way, and make an effort to allow them to perform useful non-military work. The irony, as he points out, is that there are only a few dozen young people who would be affected by such a decision at the moment, but the small number does not decrease the importance of the principle, especially if one takes into consideration the above mentioned fear of the State that such a decision could lead to mass requests for alternative service.

On the other hand, Kelemen points out that the basis groups could contribute to a compromise by publicly accepting the hierarchical structure of the Church and thereby her implied authority. They should also make efforts to prevent the appearance of sects.

Kelemen believes that there is a possibility for compromise, despite the apparently intransigent positions. He writes that if the Church has had to "fight hard" to achieve its "allegedly good relations with the State" and also in its efforts toward ecumenism, then it could certainly make some equally strenuous efforts on behalf of a compromise between its own members.

Conclusion

It is difficult to make any concluding statement about the situation of the Hungarian Church today, because the conflicts and the uncertainties do not seem any closer to being resolved than they were a year ago. This situation does not promise to improve for one important reason: the environment in which the parties to the argument live is not conducive to compromise and agreement.

Whereas many well-meaning churchmen argue in favour of a compromise, among them the above-quoted András Szennay and József Cserháti, as well as those like Csaba Kelemen writing in uncensored publications, the fact remains that compromises arrived at under totalitarian systems are always suspect. Since everyone knows that the State seeks total control over society, the conscious or unconscious fear always remains that sooner or later the compromise will be broken by the State whenever it thinks that the time has come for it to establish such control.

It is exactly this experience with compromises that has led groups like the Bulányists to reject the whole idea of them and to suffer the consequences of outright persecution, in order to be able to adhere to an idea consistently. In a democratic society that kind of stand sounds immature, since it is usually taken by political or ideological extremists.

In a totalitarian State, even the terms have different meanings. Since even such words as "compromise", "understanding", and "discussion" let alone broader concepts such as "democracy", "freedom of choice", "truth" and "justice" mean their opposite, or are given meanings inconsistent with those associated with them in countries where tolerance and understanding of various points of view are the norm, those that reject these words in a totalitarian system do not reject the ideas they stand for. On the contrary, they seek a change in the system that has created this confusion of meanings, goals and ideals. Ironically, those who reject compromise with a totalitarian State are defending the right to make real compromises adhered to by both sides without reservations.

Thus the Hungarian Church faces its present crisis, since the real gains that it has made in the past decade and a half, be they ever so modest, are being challenged by some of her members exactly because they were based on such unreliable compromises.

[1] József Cardinal Mindszenty, *Memoirs*, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1974, p. 63.

[2] For specific details, see "The Church Which Was Left Alive", pp. 53-55; "Hungary's Church in 1966", pp. 74-77 in Emeric András and Julius Morel, eds., *Church in Transition, Hungary's Catholic Church from 1945 to 1982*. Vienna: Hungarian Institute for the Sociology of Religion (Ungarisches Kirchensoziologisches Institut), 1983.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 333.

[4] See "Religious Instruction and Evangelisation (1977)" in *Church in Transition, op. cit.*, (footnote 2).

[5] "The Language of the Facts (1965)", *ibid.*, pp. 38-49.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 38 and 39.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 40 and 41.

[8] Cserháti, József, "Tovább a nyitott utakon", *Vigilia*, Budapest, October 1980, p. 653.

[9] For a detailed discussion of the interview and for an analysis of Lékai's appointment, see Hungarian Unit/KK: "László Lékai Named Archbishop of Esztergom", *Radio Free Europe Research*, Background Report 47, 19 February 1976.

[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 7 and 8.

[11] *Vigilia*, April and November, 1975; see partial translation with comments in "Situation of the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary: Chances of a Dialogue", *Radio Free Europe Research, Background Report 25* (Hungary), 23 January 1976. Also *Vigilia*, October 1980.

[12] András Szennay, "Az egyház újraéled a közöss égekben", *Vigilia*, June 1981.

[13] For an interview with Miklós, in which some of these warnings are voiced, see *Népszabadság*, 20 February 1982. For an analysis of the interview, see Hungarian Situation Report 3, *Radio Free Europe Research*, 4 March 1982, Item 6; also *RCL* Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 96.

[14] *Új Ember*, 20 September 1981.

[15] For a full text of the communiqué, see *Új Ember*, 18 October 1981. For a detailed discussion of Kovács's and Gromon's suspension, see Hungarian Situation Report 16, *Radio Free Europe Research*, 29 October 1981, Item 4.

[16] Carlo Kováts, "Further Restrictions on Suspended Priests", Hungarian Situation Report 10, *Radio Free Europe Research*, 23 June 1982, Item 5.

[17] See accompanying documents in this issue for Bulányi's letter to Lékai, pp. 38-41.

[18] Elemér Hankiss, "Közösségek: Válság és hiány" in Valóság, Budapest, September 1980.

[19] See Miklós Haraszti, "Not Striking, Nor Striking Back", in *Beszélő II*, Budapest, January 1982. For a brief summary in English of the contents of this article, see Steven Polgar, "Second Issue of Hungarian Samizdat *Beszélő* Appears", in *Radio Free Europe Research*, Background Report 151 (Hungary), 26 July 1982.

[20] See in manuscript, János Wildmann, "Das Kirchenverständnis der Katholischen Basisgruppen in Ungarn", Dissertation for the Theological Faculty of Luzern, adviser: Professor Josef Bommer, August 1983, Luzern, Switzerland. (To be published with some changes by *Kirche in Not*.) This essay provides the most extensive and the best summary available in the West at the moment of the activities and the religious views of the basis groups. Mr Wildmann makes an effort to be objective and has access to much information about the groups that may not even be available to members of the Hungarian church leadership. The information about the goals, the nature of the programme, as well as the miscellaneous characteristics of these groups is culled largely from this manuscript made available for purposes of the present essay by Mr Wildmann.

[21] *Ibid*.

[22] *Ibid*.

[23] The Piarist order, founded in Italy by St Joseph Calasanctius in 1621 and recognised in 1648, became one of the most important teaching orders in Hungary. They still retain two of the eight Catholic Secondary schools (gymnasia), in Budapest and Kecskemét.

[24] For details about Bulányi's religious principles and the guidelines of the groups under his leadership, see his letter to Cardinal Lékai below.

[25] For the text of the Pope's speech to the Hungarian bishops, see *Új Ember*, 24 October 1982.

[26] See János Wildmann, "Hungarian Conflict" in *Index on Censorship*, May 1983, p. 37. and also "Zwei Gesichter der katholischen Kirche im Ungarn", *Schweizerische Kirchenzeitung* No. 40, 6 October 1983, p. 570.

[27] *Beszélő III*, Budapest, May 1982. For a brief summary in English, see Steven Polgar, "The Third Issue of 'Beszélõ' Appears in Hungary", in *Radio Free Europe Research* Background Report 239 (Hungary), 16 November 1982, pp. 7-9.

Appendix

Fr Bulányi writes to Cardinal Lékai

We have already published extensive documentation in **RCL** ***on the controversy between the Hungarian Catholic hierarchy, headed by Cardinal László Lékai, and the "Basis" groups led by Fr György Bulányi, a member of the Piarist order now in his seventies (Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 95-108). The document which follows is a letter from Fr Bulányi addressed to Cardinal Lékai. It throws further light on the philosophy of the "Basis" groups and the reasons for the controversy which has arisen. The introduction to the documents previously published in*** **RCL** ***outlines developments during 1982 up to June, when Fr Bulányi was suspended*** **a divinis** ***(p. 95). The letter below was written on 7 March 1982, after Fr Bulányi had had two meetings with Cardinal Lékai and others, but before his suspension.***

Your Eminence,

I have received from you two invitations to a meeting. Your telegram arrived on the afternoon of 2 March, asking me to see you on 3 March. Your vicar's letter arrived on 5 March in the afternoon, inviting me for the same day or on 6 March. Unfortunately, the dates fixed by you at such short notice were inconvenient for me, not only because as my engagement diary is full for at least a month I would have been obliged to cancel some of my engagements, but also for other reasons. At our last meeting I received the rudest possible comments on my "Answers" [to questions about his views posed by the hierarchy — *Ed.*], which I had prepared with great care. Even now I have not after two weeks received the minutes of that meeting, and cannot verify whether or

not they contain the insults. It would be unwise on my part to expose myself and my flock for a third time to being insulted for hours. I am not prepared to make statements contrary to the teachings of the Church. I have taken part in two meetings and have on both occasions fulfilled the words of Archbishop Poggi*: ". . . they trust the authority of the Church; the Church will have the strength to conduct the enquiry in truth and justice." This is why I have chosen to write. I apologise for the delay of five days, but the importance of the subject-matter requires it to be thoroughly thought out.

I respectfully request Your Eminence to consider our aims as summarised below. These aims are our motivation, in spite of our weakness and our modest achievements.

1. Mindful of God and the Church, we consider it our constant duty, given to us by Jesus, that our little communities should become more and more acquainted with God, who wants to communicate with us, and bear witness in words and deeds to what we know of Him. We cannot be deterred from fulfilling our obligations, even if we are threatened with the harshest punishments, even if our lives are in peril, and with God's help we want to stand fast in the future, too.

2. We stick unflinchingly to our duties as human beings and as God's children. We try to see clearly, as the Second Vatican Council requires of us, by observing the signs of the times (Matt. 16, 4), what the Kingdom of God means here and now. In order to serve the Kingdom of God, we will continue committing our thoughts on the subject to paper, so that by reading, criticising and adding to each others' manuscripts, and by mutual encouragement, we shall do what we are able in this respect. If our Church has — thanks be to God — unequivocally supported freedom of thought in the Second Vatican Council, then it is our sacred duty to make this freedom an unquestionable reality within the Church. We are prepared for a "dialogue" with any readers of our manuscripts, a summary of the conceptual contents of which I handed over at our last meeting for the minutes.

3. On the strength of what we have seen so far, we try to serve life, so that it should become more abundant (John 10, 10).

a) In the service of life, we face the death of our nation. Last year the population declined by two thousand, and according to forecasts it will decline further in the near future by hundreds of thousands. In our communities we consider it quite normal for families to have four, five, six or even more children; we think a mother should stay at home to rear the children; and we think a family should be able to manage on one person's income. Since the Second World War the nation has condemned five million lives to death by abortion. The losses in the tragic battles of Mohács [1526] and of the Don [1943] were negligible compared with those due to abortion. Atheists have already raised their voices courageously. The families of our small communities protest with their lives against this gross immorality of our society, which eats up its own children in the interest of raising material living standards.

b) In the service of life, we reject all other forms of killing people. We do not learn war any more, as Isaiah dreamt of the times following the birth of Jesus. We do not promise the destruction of our enemies, because everybody is our neighbour. We are not prepared to become patriotic mass murderers, war criminals. Other people's consciences may speak differently, but we see it as an intrinsic element of our faithfulness to Jesus that we cannot ignore the Fifth Commandment, any more than we can the other nine. For us the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" is a hundredfold sacred — it is a divine commandment that knows no exception. We believe and openly declare that without the Fifth Commandment the Kingdom of Heaven and the classless society are unattainable, violence will not cease, and the State will not wither away. Fighting will stop only when there are no more fighters. Whatever punishments or suffering we have to face, we are not going to give up our faith. We pray that Your Eminence's Catholic heart, formed like that of Jesus, should be filled with pride and joy at the knowledge that since September 1979 eight Hungarian Catholics have made a heroic confession of faith, and that at present there are still four imprisoned for their witness. [This is a reference to refusing military conscription — *Ed.*]

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*Pontifical representative of the Council for Public Affairs of the Church and Apostolic Nuncio with special interests; frequently sent to Eastern Europe by the Vatican as a negotiator — *Ed.*

c) In the service of life, we endeavour to direct our consciences in such a way as not to increase our standard of living. We want not to increase it from two to three but to reduce it from three to two, so far as purchasable goods are concerned. We do this so that the superfluity can be given to the hungry rather than turned into superfluous goods for us to save, because this is "pure religion and undefiled" (James 1, 27), and because without feeding Jesus who hungers in billions of people, we cannot expect to be gathered among the blessed (Matt. 25, 31-46).

d) In the service of life we exclude from our little communities all governing, commanding and subordination of others to ourselves, all forms of compelling obedience, remembering the words of Jesus: "All ye are brethren" (Matt. 23, 8). We place our hopes in revelation and in human conscience. We hope we all listen to Jesus and to the Spirit. We obey Jesus' commandments and we obey the Spirit, which reminds us of His words, for this is what the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit — the Holy Trinity — requires from the Church, and from each member of the Church. It is required in imitation of Jesus, who was willing to hearken to His Father, and was consequently condemned to death for disobedience by his nation's high priest; in imitation of the apostles and the martyr Stephen, who were incarcerated, beaten or stoned to death by order of the same high priest, and who knew that they had to disobey man in order to obey God, even if it meant laying down their own lives. In the Church we all have to obey God (Acts 5, 29).

4. This is how we want to serve Jesus, who has taught us the Word of Life in His Church:

in humble, not lordly, positions, serving and not ruling, watching and drawing attention to the Spirit, without commanding others or compelling obedience;

as poor, not rich people, as ordinary men producing and delivering rather than exercising power as privileged people, feeding the hungry rather than pushing our standard of living up and up;

as meek lambs, not ravening wolves, not throwing our children in the canal, not trusting murderous weapons, not defending our rights by violence, state authority or lawsuits, but forgiving all; not repaying evil with evil but striving for peace.

[. . .] We are trying to emulate the poor persecuted Jesus in our lives, in the service of love that is ready to give, to sacrifice and to make peace.

We are not trying to change the dogmas of the Church, which are mysteries described more than once by the apostle Paul in the words: "for now we see through a glass darkly" (1 Cor. 13, 12). What we are basically interested in is to understand and to imitate a Jesus-like way of life. We are trying to serve the historical development of the dogmas (orthodoxy) through emulating Jesus (orthopraxis). Within the Church and in society as a whole we are striving for unity brought about by loving service. By this means we hope also for the revival of unity in faith, because Jesus-like faithfulness and our clinging belief have no more sublime, more basic or more universal object than the love we have learned from Jesus. We are sure that no dogma can originate from Jesus which would make us hate or kill an enemy or be indifferent towards the hungry.

We all stand before Christ's judgement seat. The whole Church stands there, too, because Christ's message is love. Our aim is to fulfil this commandment and to let everybody recognise that we are His disciples. Our small communities are motivated by this alone.

5. The number of our priests is diminishing alarmingly. Our churches, deprived of priests, are empty, yet we trust in the authority of Jesus (Mark 1, 22). We trust implicitly in the power of the Word and its teaching to bring society, irrespective of religion or non-religion, to the realisation that the unadulterated (Matt. 10, 16) words of Jesus speak for the life of society as a whole. It will understand that He is the only way, and everything else is a cul-de-sac. For this very reason we would think it natural if the chief Hungarian shepherd of Jesus' poor, meek, unprotected Catholic Church, which defies the powerful of this world, were to embrace us with all the love of his heart, moved by our Jesus-like ideals, our optimistic efforts to reverse the population decline and our pastoral conceptions based on small communities — since, as Pope Paul VI said, the small communities are "the hope of the Church".

6. We consider it natural and claim, as always, that our chief Shepherd should extend his love, his attention and his care to us. With this in mind, I have the honour to

inform Your Eminence of the following:

a) It must be evident to you from my consistent statements at the two meetings and my "Answers" that we adhere to the unerring teachings of our Church. This we declare again.

b) If in any words of ours, spoken or written, you should find anything that you judge contrary to the teachings of our Church, we shall respectfully and conscientiously think over your corrections, stemming as they do from your high office, your understanding, your responsibility and your love. The reason why I submitted my "Answers" to the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is because for us it is extremely important to teach what the Church has learned from Jesus, as the Spirit reminds the Church. We are always prepared to learn from those who have received a special charisma from the Spirit.

c) I am ready and willing to take part in further dialogues, if I receive a guarantee that at the meetings not a single participant will revile us or our aims. Such behaviour is not necessary for achieving justice, and is totally inadequate for expressing the truth of the love of Jesus. Vilification nullifies argument. Since I want to preserve the Church's teachings concerning human dignity, I do not wish my presence at a meeting to give anybody the opportunity of offending human dignity. I say this in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council: "It is the disciple's obligation to his Master, Christ, to come to know as fully as possible the truth received from Him, and to propagate and effectively protect this truth, excluding all means contrary to the spirit of the Gospel. At the same time Christ's love urges you to treat your erring and ignorant fellow men with understanding, tolerance and love" (*Dignitatis Humanae*, 14). It is very sad for me to think that in 1952 under the Rákosi regime, the atheist major who interrogated me at the secret police headquarters under the direction of Gábor Péter [secret police chief — *Ed.*] for sixty days showed more respect for my person and my activities than was my lot at the two above-mentioned meetings, which can in no way be called dialogues. Again and again I protested against the proceedings and the tone of voice. I wanted my protest to be entered in the minutes, but unfortunately this was not done.

As early as the dialogue of 5 December, I asked that the unacceptably rude criticisms of our writings by Professors Gál and Vanyó be attached to the minute book. Your Eminence rejected my request. The minutes contain neither my request nor the refusal. Now I ask again that they should be attached, together with my brethren's replies to criticisms, in order to dispel any doubts as to our own conscientious respect and love in the face of whatever style of behaviour. I have to ask for this most particularly because the minutes of the meeting of 5 December do not reflect the behaviour to which we were subjected.

It may seem superfluous, but to avoid any misunderstanding I must mention that my frequent use in this letter of the first person plural means unequivocally that I do not state these things alone, but together with all my brethren of the same persuasion.

In an effort to promote reconciliation within the Hungarian Church, I am sending copies of this letter, as I did with my "Answers", to all Hungarian bishops. Of course, I have informed my superiors in Rome, too. I am always ready to serve the Church of Jesus, and my continuing aim is that you should treat me as your brother in Jesus Christ and not as an enemy to be put aside. I greet you with respect and love.

BULÁNYI, GYÖRGY Sch.P.
Budapest, 7 March 1982

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Michael Szaz, secretary for international relations, American Hungarian Federation, has been asked to testify and submit testimony.

[Dr. Szaz's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF Z. MICHAEL SZAZ, PH.D., SECRETARY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, AMERICAN HUNGARIAN FEDERATION

Mr. Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to testify before your committee at your request on religious rights in Romania.

As you know, I have visited Romania, particularly the province of Transylvania and Bucharest, several times. The first trip occurred at the request of then Ambassador Harry Barnes and the Romanian Foreign Ministry in 1976 in my capacity as the Secretary of International Relations of the American Hungarian Federation, a 78-year-old national umbrella organization of American Hungarian churches, societies and cultural organizations, a position which I hold again in that organization since 1981. In addition, I have studied the situation in Transylvania for decades and had access to considerable information published on the subject during my research.

At this juncture, I would like also to express my appreciation to three other organizations which helped me with material and encouragement in writing my testimony, the American Hungarian Action Committee, the Transylvanian World Federation and the World Federation of Free Hungarian Jurists.

In Romania, there are two kinds of churches, established and tolerated. Insofar as the churches of the national minorities are established (they were in existence in Transylvania for many centuries) I will focus on them. All churches are controlled by the Ministry of Cults, a full-fledged ministry in the cabinet. Its function is to ensure that the churches do not advocate any positions contrary to the atheistic government policies, do not engage in social and teaching activities. In short, they are only to allow ritual acts, mostly masses and divine services on Sunday. Church life, as it is known in the United States and Western Europe is forbidden as the government's commitment to atheism only allows services as a concession to the unenlightened masses who must be educated to divest themselves of religious "superstition."

What distinguishes Romania from other countries of the Communist bloc, is, that with the exception of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, it has the most brutal and pervasive Ministry of Cults bureaucracy in Eastern Europe. The Ministry has county representatives who have to be present when the bishop speaks to any foreigner. In May 1976 when I had been granted an interview of Gyula Nagy, Hungarian Reformed bishop of Kolozsvar (Cluj-Napoca), the county representative of the Ministry of Cults had to be present.

The control over the churches is exercised in different ways. Ministry of Cults regulations as what activities are allowed is one approach. More pervasive is the control over the internal affairs of the churches by the power of the purse. In Romania, like in most countries of the region, the state pays the salaries of the priests and the ministers. Thus, the state can refuse to pay the salaries of any clergymen not preferred by its authorities. Tranfers, promotions and acceptance into the seminaries must all be confirmed by the Ministry of Cults giving them virtual veto power over church administration. Only those who accept the strict restraints upon their church activities by the atheistic state can expect to occupy important positions within the churches. The man of the cloth who values Christ's words over the fiats of the state will soon be persecuted either internally by transfer to mountain villages, or externally by harrassment, and later, by arrest, conveniently arranged "car accidents," or long prison terms. Let me provide you with personal examples. In 1976 I visited the best know shrine of the Blessed Mother in Transylvania, Csiksomlyo in the Hungarian Szekely area. There was only one priest left, a Franciscan monk, despite the fact that the town has been for many centuries the main abode of the Franciscan order in Transylvania. The priest offered me hospitality and told me that at Pentecost there are still about 20,000 people coming to the shrine as pilgrims. Needless to say that this remained a thorn in the flesh of the authorities. By early 1983 the priest was dead, a victim of a conveniently arranged car accident. If you ever drove in Transylvania, you know that traffic is minimal even in the few cities, not to mention the countryside around Csiksomlyo.

Another example was a young Hungarian Reformed minister at Des (Dej) who aroused the displeasure of the Securitate (secret police) both by his commitment to Christ's teachings and with his emphasis upon his Hungarian culture. He was arrested in 1982 and beaten to death. When the parents claimed the body the asinine story that he had committed suicide by beating his head against the prison wall was told them in order to exonerate the brutal police attackers.

The Hungarian and German churches in Romania are Catholic or Protestant. The largest is the Catholic church which officially counts about 1.2 million believers. If you add those who do not dare to register because of the fear of discrimination in their jobs or the education of their children, the truer number would be at least 1.5 to 1.6 million. The church is about 80 percent Hungarian, 15 percent German and about 5 percent so-called Romania.

The "Romanian" Catholics are really the Hungarian "csango"-s of Moldavia who settled there in the 18th century to escape Austrian military rule in their countries after 1763. They are forbidden to have their own schools in Moldavia and by now receive instruction in Romanian only. They are given Romanian-speaking priests in order to complete their Romanization as the Romanian authorities even deny their Hungarian ancestry.

The Roman Catholic church has only one archbishop and two bishops. Two further bishoprics remain unfilled since 1945 and there is no concordat with Rome. The church lives in enforced separation from the Vatican and has not yet instituted the decrees of Vatican II. The masses are still celebrated in Latin. The Roman Catholic church has been led by the legendary Hungarian bishop, Aaron Marton of Gyulafehérvár (Alba Julia) until his death in 1977. He had been arrested, tried and imprisoned for several years following 1949 and even after his restoration as a bishop he lived under virtual house arrest. Despite my status as a semi-official visitor I was not allowed to see him, nor was I allowed in 1978 to visit his successor, Andras Jakab. The archbishop resides in Bucharest and is an ethnic German whom I was permitted to see. In the mid-1970's a new bishopric was formed in Moldavia with a Romanian Catholic bishop who resides in Ias.

The Catholic church, just like its Protestant counterparts, suffers also under the lack of prayer books and bibles. According to Ministry of Cults sources, about 3,000 prayer books and bibles are printed a year for the Catholics in Hungarian. There is a Catholic religious paper which appears four times a year but cannot concentrate on any topics dealing with the social realities in Romania from a Catholic standpoint. The number of seminarians accepted is strictly controlled and there is only one seminary for the Catholic clergy in Romania (Alba Julia).

Priests and clergymen are also not allowed to receive financial assistance from abroad. Any donations over $100 must be approved by their bishops, who, in turn, have to secure permission from the Ministry of Cults.

Despite these encumbrances, church attendance, especially in the rural areas, remains high, although the younger generation is not present because of state-sponsored athletic and political activities on Sunday morning which they have to attend.

The Protestant churches in Romania are either Hungarian or German. The Magyar Reformed Church is the largest, it has 700,000 registered members, but Transylvanian Reformed ministers told me that in view of the impediments, the truer number would be between 900,000 and 1 million. The church has two bishoprics, one in Kolozsvar (Cluj-Napoca) and Nagyvarad (Oradea). I was allowed to visit both bishops in 1976 and met with Bishop Nagy in 1978, too. The church had preserved in its baptismal registers and ministers' diaries much of the Hungarian history of the province as there are no Reformed church members who are not Hungarians. In this instance, external control is reenforced with collaborating church authorities. While Bishop Nagy is in my eyes a true Christian believer who is both intimidated and hindered in the implementation of his duties, Bishop Laszlo Papp is an equivalent of the peace priests in Czechoslovakia. He is also a member of the Grand National Assembly and his loyalty is apparently to the Romanian atheist state instead of the church despite his frequent Bible quotes.

The churches were deprived of their baptismal records and other material in his diocese in 1975 on the pretext that they might be lost in the villages and should be brought together in state archives. The result is that only reliable Romanian historians are now allowed to look at the documents of the 1,000 Hungarian past of Transylvania. In 1978, I made an issue of seeing the documents in the State Archives in Kolozsvar (Cluj-Napoca). To do so, not even the Romanian Foreign Ministry was empowered. In order to let me in, they needed further authorizations from other ministries. The documents are uncatalogued but in relatively good shape but completely inacessible to anyone but a few Communist Romanian historians selected by the Ceaucescu regime.

Repairs of churches is another way of influencing the future of churches in Romania. The state repairs only a limited number so that the actual number of churches declines year to year. When Western European churches offered to help pay for the repairs, their assistance was rejected.

The German Lutheran Church based on the bishopric of Sibiu (Nagyszeben) has other problems. Between 1978 and 1986, 63,000 Germans were allowed to emigrate in return for considrable German investment in the shaky Romanian economy. As a result, only 300,000 Germans now live in Romania, almost all of them in southern Translyvania and the Banat. They also have strict restriction on bibles, religious literature and have no independence in their internal affairs. However, they are less impaired because the Romanian state does not want to encourage their emigration.

There is still a small established Hungarian Transylvanian church, i.e., the Unitarian church which is not universalist in Transylvania. It has, however, few adherents left, official figures speak only of 35,000.

The conclusion to be drawn of the situation of the churches of the national minorities is that they are under two kinds of pressures. The first pressures emanates of the atheistic commitment of the Communist state and aims at the ultimate elimination of the churches and religion in general. The second kind of pressure is to eliminate the Hungarian (and German) character of the established churches and thereby promote denationalization of the minorities.

The denationalization pressures are concentrated upon the Magyar Reformed churches and to a great extent upon the Catholic churches. However, because of the mixed nationality situation in the Catholic churches, there is an attempt to exert pressure on Catholics in Moldavia to become Romanian and still remain Catholic.

The only church which only has to deal with the atheistic constraints, but not the nationalist ones, is the Roman Orthodox church, but even here the situation is far from satisfactory.

One, formerly established, church has been abolished by state decree. This was the Byzantine rite Catholic church in Transylvania which had a mixed Romanian-Hungarian flock. Since 1948 they had been driven underground, and fled either to the Catholic church, or were forcibly merged with Orthodox churches. Their plight is practically unknown and should be exposed here. Their bishops and many of their priests died in prison and they are still officially unrecognized.

The present statement is a background analysis. There are many new instances of persecution and impairment of the work of the churches in Transylvania.

May I congratulate you Mr. Chairman, for having selected my good friend, Rt. Rev. Bishop Janos Butosi from Connecticut to testify on the above matters and I am sure that this testimony will shed further light upon the oppression of the churches and national minorities in Romania.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF Z. MICHAEL SZAZ

Name: Z. Michael Szaz.

Position: Secretary of International Relations, American Hungarian Federation, 1965–77, 1981.

Executive Vice President, National Confederation of Ethnic Groups, 1979.

Studies Program Director, American Foriegn Policy Institute, 1980.

Former Vice President, American Foreign Policy Institute 1975–79.

Associate Professor, Troy State University, 1971–72.

Associate Professor, Seton Hall University, 1965–68.

Executive Director, American Institute on Problems of European Unity, Inc., 1968–75.

National Chairman and Executive Director, University Professors for Academic Order, 1970–71.

Instructor and Assistant Professor, St. John's University, Jamaica, N.Y. 1960–64.

Education: B.A. cum laude, St. John's University, Collegeville, Minn. 1951; M.A. Catholic University of America, 1953; and Ph.D., Catholic University of America, 1956.

Publications: 2 books (one in German, too.) 5 studies, 28 articles in American and West German journals. Columnist for Washington Times, 1983.

The **CHAIRMAN**. And Mrs. Vera Romuk, secretary, Bielarusian Coordinating Committee, of Chicago, IL, has been asked to submit testimony.

[The material referred to follows:]

STATEMENT REGARDING RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN BIELARUS/BYELORUSSIA AND OTHER VIOLATIONS OF CONCERN TO AMERICAN BIELARUSIANS, PREPARED BY VERA ROMUK, SECRETARY OF THE BIELARUSIAN COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF CHICAGO, IL

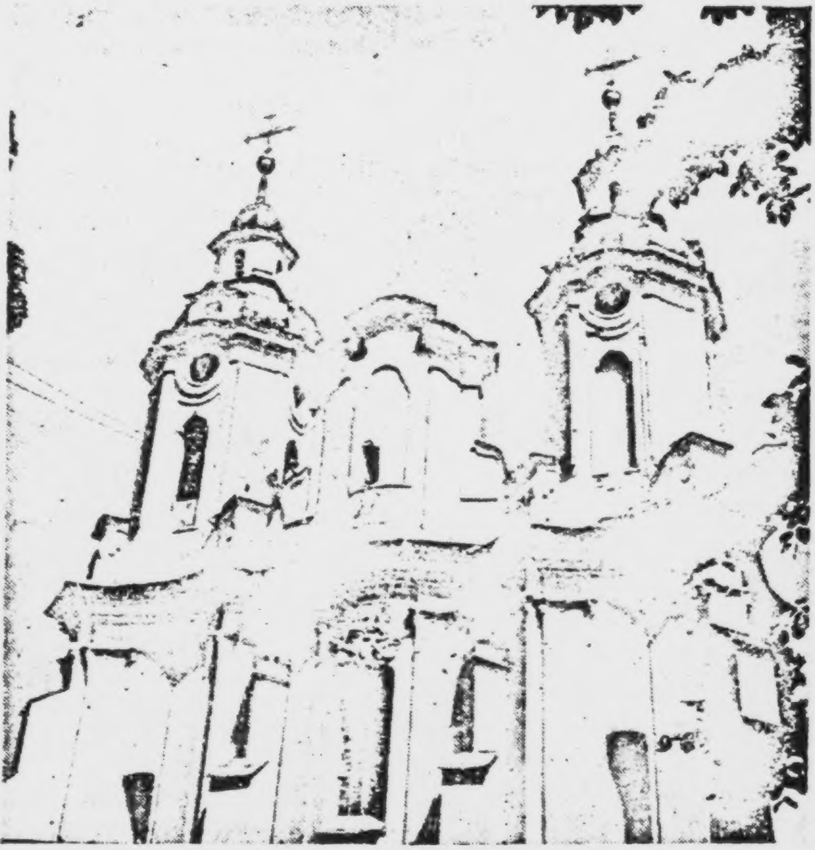
Time and again we hear the preachings in our churches that man does not live by bread alone. How true! Besides the daily bread man also needs a spiritual bread. This is particularly true and is evidenced by numerous utterances made by my Bielarusian/Byelorussian co-compatriots. On contacts, when discussing life in Soviet Byelorussia, one often hears these remarks—"The living conditions have improved. There is enough to eat and clothes, though inferior in quality, are there. Our lives would be happier, though, if we could worship God freely, if there were no restrictions on travels abroad and if we could exercise our right to speak out our mind."

In the Soviet Byelorussian press to emigrants abroad, in the "Hoas Radziny" (The Voice of Homeland) articles appear from time to time about churches which are being restored and renovated. At first glance one may think that these churches are being preserved for the sake of worshipers, but alas! These churches are remade into museums, clubhouses, music halls and other facilities, and they are being preserved as monuments of the Byelorussian architectural past (See inserts 1 and 2). The Byelorussian people have no say because showing of interest and addressing to religious matters subjects them to harsh treatment and eventual imprisonment or placement in the psychiatric hospitals. Thus, the Byelorussian people have been made silent. There are a few, however, who persisted and dared to challenge the Soviet authorities despite the consequences. To date they still languish in the Soviet prison camps and they have been asking and waiting for our help in hopes that their pleas will be heard, that governments in the free world would address themselves and intercede in their behalf. Michal Kukabaka/Mikhail Kukobaka and Halina Vilčynskaja/Galin Vilchinskaya are the two most outspoken and most known Byelorussian prisoners today who are behind bars because of their religious and national convictions (See insert 3). They need our immediate attention and help.

[Insert 1]

MONUMENTS OF BIELARUSIAN ARCHITECTURE

ПОМНІКІ БЕЛАРУСКАЙ АРХІТЭКТУРЫ



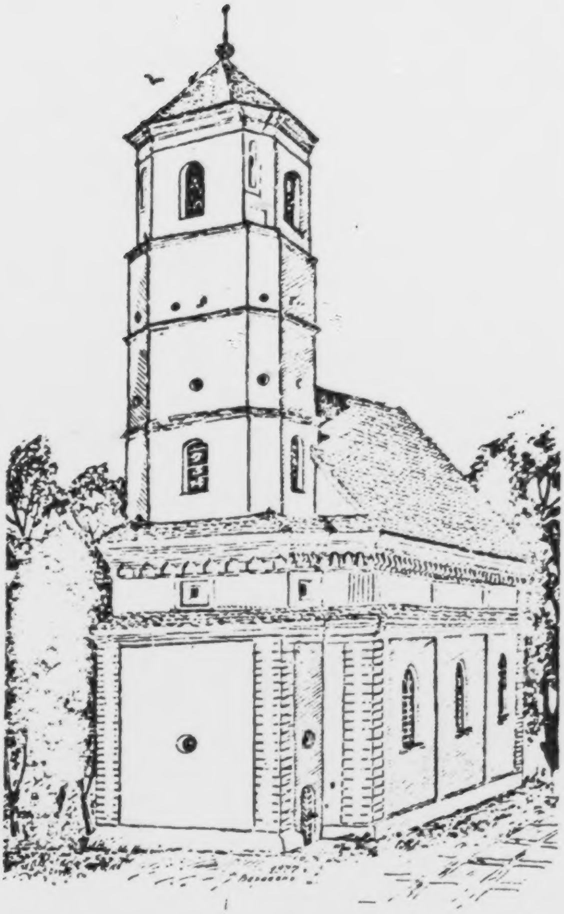
У архітэктурным рашэнні Свята-Троіцкай царквы, пабудаванай у вёсцы Вольна на Брэстчыне ў XVIII стагоддзі, знайшлі адлюстраванне рысы так званага «віленскага барока». Па сваёй кампазіцыі будынак хутчэй нагадвае каталіцкі храм, чым праваслаўную царкву. Гэта абумоўлена барацьбой, а пазней аб'яднаннем, «уніяй» праваслаўнай і каталіцкай веры ў заходніх раёнах Беларусі. Царква будавалася як уніяцкая, а пазней была пераасвячона ў праваслаўную.

Яе белакаменны будынак пануе над навакольнымі забудовамі дзякуючы сваёй вышыні і рэльефу мясцовасці. Велізарныя дрэвы старога парку, які акружае царкву, дапаўняюць маляўнічасць і дэкаратыўнасць гэтага своеасаблівага помніка архітэктуры.

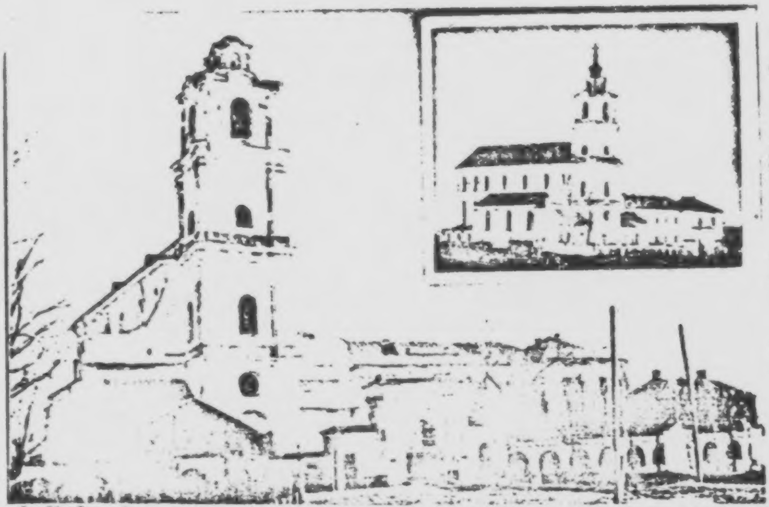
НА ЗДЫМКУ: Свята-Троіцкая царква.

Фота Г. ЛІХТАРОВІЧА.

[Insert 2]



Спаса-Праабражэнская царква — помнік культавай архітэктуры XVI—XVII стагоддзяў.



Let us not forget! # Народ не забудзе ніколі!

in 1632
1.Holy Trinity Church in Druja,BSSR,built by count L.Sapieha
2.This Church after 1955y.German Nazis took away historical bells in 1941.Russian Communists robed,desecrated and martyred to death Rev.A.Kulesza,1941,Mnsr.P.Abrantovič,1942,and A.Cikota,1952.23 monks fromMarianens'Monastery enslaved.1945

The Bielarusian[1] centuries-old churches are being reconstructed in Soviet Bielarus (BSSR) today as "Monuments of Bielarusian Architecture" for the use as museums, music halls, clubhouses and other facilities but not for the worship of God. Some samples follow.

(1) The Holy Trinity Church in Volna Village, Brest region, is being preserved as an architectural monument. It has not been learned yet what is housed in this church structure today. The word "volna" means free in Bielarusian.

Story and picture appeared in the Soviet Bielarusian language newspaper "Hoas Radzimy" (The Voice of Homeland). This newspaper is published in Minsk and is sent out to Bielarusian emigrants abroad by the Soviet Bielarusian Government.

(2) The Church of the Transfiguration of Our Lord in Zaslaul, the town near Minsk, now houses the BSSR State Historical Museum. The church was built in the XVI century.

The drawing and information were printed in "Hoas Radzimy".

(3) The Holy Trinity Church in Druja was desecrated during and after the end of World War II by both the Nazis and the Russian Communists. Its fate is unknown today.

Photo and description were supplied by the Byelorussian Library and Museum of Francis Skaryna in London, England.

THE BIELARUSIAN MARTYRS FOR CHRIST

(1) Galina Vilchinskaja (in Bielarusian Halina Vilčynskaja), born August 4, 1958, is suffering persecution because of her faith in God and for teaching children about God. This young lady was first arrested on August 29, 1979 and sentenced on August 18, 1980 to 3 years in forced labor camps. She was arrested on November 20, 1982, was sentenced to additional 2 years of imprisonment and is now languishing in one of the most dreadful of all Soviet concentration camps in the Khabarovsk

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[1] The word Bielarusian (pronounced Bye-lah-roo-see-yan) is derived from Biearus (pronounced Bye-lah-roos) and it designates the people who call themselves "biearusy". Their country's name—Bielarus—is as legitimate as those of Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, El Salvador etc. It should be applied and accepted throughout the world as the rightful name of the "biearusy" (bye-lah-roo-see) folk. They have their inherent right to be known under the name which suits them best and which comes from their native tongue and not that of their occupant.

region, village Zaosernoye, in the USSR. Halina is from Brest, Bielarus and a Christian Evangelical Baptist. (Information about the case of Galina Vilchinskaja was obtained from the International Representation for the Council of Evangelical Baptist Churches of the Soviet Union, Inc., headed by Rev. Georgi P. Vins.)

(2) Michal Kukabaka (in Russian Mikhail Kukobaka), born December 3, 1936, was first arrested in 1970. He was arrested and held in prisons, labor camps and special psychiatric hospitals on various occasions. Presently Kukabaka is serving time in strict regime labor camps at Elets. Kukabaka is a Christian Orthodox and his only crime is that he wants to express his opinions and practice his religion freely. (Information about Kukabaka was supplied by *Bielarus* newspaper in New York and Amnesty International in London, England.)

[NOTE.—Though Michail Prutianu is not of Byelorussians nationality, he is Moldavian, as a human being he deserves our attention. He is imprisoned in Bielarus, Vitebsk oblast, city of Novapolatsk, for distributing Christian literature. His name should be entered on the list with other prisoners of conscience for future help. His name was supplied by Rev. Vins' daughter Natasha.]

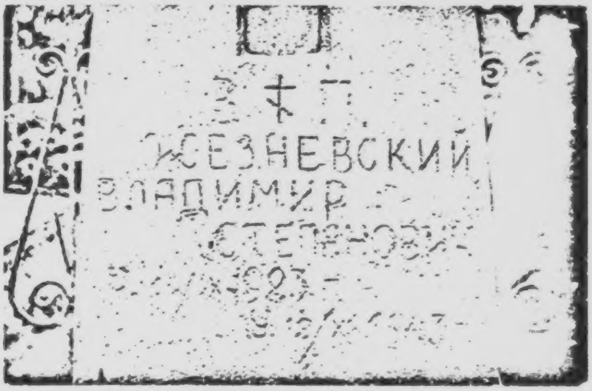
Not all churches are closed in Soviet Byelorussia today, but those that still exist are completely controlled by the Soviet government and the Russian Orthodox Church from Moscow, therefore the Bielarussian people mistrust their priests and higher hierarchy. The Orthodox churches in Byelorussia are deprived of their national autonomy and their native Byelorussian language. The priests are trying to impress upon the minds of the Byelorussian people that salvation from above will come only when they pray in the Russian language. The purpose of this is to assimilate the Byelorussian people into the Russian nation and culture. Despite the fact that the Soviet government forbids religion, they still sanction and encourage the printing of books and articles by their Russian Soviet scholars on religious subjects, distorting the true facts and the religious and national heritage of the non-Russian peoples in the USSR. They try to convince the Byelorussian people, for example, that their saints—St. Euphrosine of Polack, St. Cyril of Turov, and the three Martyr Saints of Vilna do not belong to them, thus depriving the Byelorussian people of their past and their human and national dignity. They tell the Byelorussian people that their first printer of books and the Bible was not Francis (Francisak) Skaryna of Polack but a Russian by the name of Ivan Fyodorov, whose printings came about fifty years later than those of Dr. Skaryna. The list of Russian distortions and violations grows longer as one reads the Soviet publications. The Soviet magazine, "Soviet Life", which is distributed in the United States, is full of distortions and its contents are based mainly on the Russian culture and the Russian life style. The discrimination against the non-Russian cultures continues despite the guarantee by the Soviet constitution that all republics are equal in every respect of its meaning.

As far as the Byelorussian Catholics are concerned, they are being deprived of their national Byelorussian status. They are told that because they are Catholics that they cannot consider themselves to be Bielarusians despite the fact that they themselves and their ancestors were born on Byelorussian soil. Because of their Catholic religion they must consider themselves Polish. What a nonsense! By following this formula, then every Catholic in the world is Polish also. Certainly the Catholic Bielarusians will never assimilate into the Russian nation and culture because of their difference of religion and they, therefore, must be considered a foreign element on their own soil. This is justice Soviet style!

The outrageous russification extends even to the cemeteries. The Byelorussians are even deprived of the privilege to inscribe the names of their deceased on markers and monuments in the Bielarusian language. Thus, the first and last names of the deceased are Russianized and written with the Russian alphabet. The Bielarusians have their own Cyrillic alphabet (See inserts 4 and 5) but the deceased Bielarusians cannot speak and defend themselves. The Russians want to have control not only of those who are alive but also of those who are dead.

[Insert 4]

THIS PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN IN THE LATE SEVENTIES BY A VISITOR TO BIELARUS FROM A GRAVE OF A RELATIVE. THE INSCRIPTION ON THE MARKER WAS IN BIELARUSIAN BEFORE.



В ☦ П V ☦ P

ЖЕЗНЕВСКИЙ ВЛАДИМИР СТЕПАНОВИЧ Р. 16/IX. 1923 У. 12/X. 1943
Zheznevskey Vladimir Stepanovich R. (born) 16. IX. 1923 U. (died) 12. X. 1943
V ☦ P means eternal memory (Vechnaja Pamyat')

IN THE BIELARUSIAN LANGUAGE THE ABOVE INSCRIPTION WOULD BE WRITTEN AS FOLLOWS:

С ☦ П
ЖЫЗЬНЕЎСКІ УЛАДЗІМІР
16/IX/1923 — 12/X/1943

Zyznieuski Uładzimir
16/IX/1923 — 12/X/1943

[Insert 5]

BELORUSSIAN ALPHABETS

Latin	Cyrillic	Pronunciation
a	а	a (in *ah)*
b	б	b
c	ц	ts (in *tsetse)*
ć	ць	ts (palatalized)
č	ч	ch
d	д	d
e	э	e (in *ten)*
f	ф	f
g	ґ	g (in *go)*
h	г	h (in *have)*
i	і	i (in *machine)*
j	й	y (in *boy)*
k	к	k
l	ль	l (in *million)*
l	л	l (in *table)*
m	м	m
n	н	n
ń	нь	n (in *onion)*
o	о	o (in *horse)*
p	п	p
r	р	r
s	с	s
ś	сь	s (palatalized)
š	ш	sh
t	т	t
u	у	u (in *rule)*

Latin	Cyrillic	Pronunciation
ŭ	ў	w (in *how)*
v	в	v
y	ы	y (in *Mary)*
z	з	z (in *zero)*
ź	зь	z (palatalized)
ž	ж	s (in *pleasure)*
ch	х	ch (in Scottish *loch)*
dz	дз	dz (in *adze)*
dž	дж	j (in *jet)*
after consonants:		
ia	я	ya (in *yah)*
ie	е	ye (in *yet)*
io	ё	yo (in *yonder)*
iu	ю	yu (in *tune)*
after vowels or beginning the word:		
ji	і	yi (in *yield)*
ja	я	ya (in *yah)*
je	е	ye (in *yet)*
jo	ё	yo (in *yonder)*
ju	ю	u (in *use)*

NOTE: The above copy was made from the book entitled "Opposition to Sovietization in Belorussian Literature" by Anthony Adamovich, 1958.

OTHER VIOLATIONS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE AND CONCERN

(1) The Soviet government is aiming at preventing visits of relatives in the Soviet Union from abroad, and the United States in particular. This is done by way of searches that are conducted by the Soviet customs officials. In a humiliating and dehumanizing way the visitors (men, women and teenagers) are often disrobed and their bodies carefully examined—every anatomical opening of the body is looked into. This embarrassing experience forces many to make a decision to never go back to the Soviet Union again. Other harassments are also made where visitors are detained for some "friendly talks" and made to miss their planes. The reason the harassments are made is because the visitors tell of good life in the West. In the eyes of the Soviet government only the citizens of the Soviet Union "have the best" and the visitors from the West infect them with "vicious bourgeoise propaganda." Our United States government should look into this matter and tell the Soviet government of the mental torment that is caused to the American citizens by their customs officials.

(2) Today, there is a concern of equal and vital importance to Americans whose roots are in the non-Russian parts of the Soviet Union. The Russian conspiracy throughout the world to identify the non-Russian Union Republics of the USSR, their peoples, their economic achievements, their arts and sciences, and their talents as Russian is causing us anger and indignation. It is sad indeed to see that our American radio, television, newspapers and newsmagazines carry distorting stories and identities concerning the USSR and the Soviet citizens, particularly when it concerns the people and the non-Russian republics of the Soviet Union. There is no doubt that some people in our media are paid by the Soviet Russian leaders in the Kremlin for their efforts to promote the Russian ego and to glorify and idolize the Russian people while others do it out of sheer ignorance. Most Americans do not take the time to learn that the Russian state (the Russian imperial state as well as the revolutionary state of Russia) has ceased to exist with the creation of the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, not Russia) on December 30, 1922. Russia is now a republic of the Soviet Union and is known to the world as the RSFSR (the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic). It is also commonly referred to as Russian Federation. Its status in the USSR is the same as that of the states of New York, Texas, or California in the USA. The problem with the Russian republic is that it outnumbers in population other non-Russian republics and therefore has a dominant role in directing the affairs of the Soviet state. This is the reason why the Russian leaders in the Kremlin push for the Russianization of the non-Russian parts of the Soviet Union and present the Soviet Union as Russia to the world. The American citizens with roots in Byelorussia, Ukraine, Armenia, Moldavia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Uzbekia, Kazakia, Kirghizia, Tajikia, Turkmenia and the Baltic States would be grateful to Senator Percy and other members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for looking into this matter to give human dignity, recognition, and identity in the United States to the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union.

I urge that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee conduct hearings in this matter. Our denial and disregard for the existence of the non-Russian people in the Soviet Union also deprives millions of Americans, including this writer, of the rightful claims to their heritage. The Captive Nations Week is approaching next month. This would be the ideal time to promulgate our sentiments for the Captive Nations in the Soviet Union.

Prepared Statement of the Committee for Defense of Prisoners of Conscience in Byelorussia, New York, N.Y.

Since October of 1980, when the last of three statements was made before the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe[1] on behalf of people in Soviet

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[1] Cases of the persecution of people in Soviet Byelorussia for their religious convictions were reported before the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe in 1977 in two documents, one signed jointly by Vitaut Tumash, President of the Byelorussian Institute of Arts and Sciences and Anton Shukieloyts, President of the Byelorussian-American Association; and the other signed by John Kosiak, President of the Byelorussian Congress Committee in America (see *Hearings before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe*. Ninety-Fifth Congress, First Session on Implementation of the Helsinki Accords. Vol. II. Religious Liberty and Minority Rights in the Soviet Union. April 27 and 28, 1977. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1977, pp. 213–218).

Continued

Byelorussia persecuted for their religious convictions, additional cases of arrests and harassment have become known from various sources, published in the West as well as in the Soviet Union.

The intervening years have seen evidence of a resurgence of a religious search among the Byelorussian population, including certain segments of the younger generation.

On October 18, 1980, the Byelorussian Komsomol newspaper *Chyrvonaya Zmena* (Red Generation) carried a report from one of the western counties of the Republic that "the number of young people who marry religiously and baptize their children is growing every year."

The extent to which the Soviet authorities in Soviet Byelorussia go in their efforts to eradicate religion—thus contradicting their own claims that religion and state are separated in the Soviet Union—is exemplified by the following data given by Isoif Naumchik, Communist Party secretary for the Vitebsk Region, speaking over Radio Moscow on July 21, 1982:

"Every year Party organizations send more than 80 Communists to study at the Region's University of Marxism-Leninism where evening and correspondence courses on scientific atheism are conducted. Twenty-one people's universities of scientific atheism with an enrollment of over 1,600 students are active in the Region."

There are in the Region 680 lecturers, 2,400 agitators, and over 3,000 political informants specializing in matters of atheism."

The Vitebsk Region is one of the six into which the Byelorussian Republic of 10 million people is divided. Some additional data on the government's onslaught against religion were provided by the daily *Sovetskaya Belorussiya* (Soviet Byelorussia) of June 8, 1982:

"In the period of 1961-1977 nearly 160 books and brochures as well as over 200 magazine articles on scientific-atheism were published in the Republic."

People with religious views are not only harangued by lecturers, agitators, and the printed word, but also by administrative authorities whenever someone attempts to communicate his or her religious convictions to others. In such instances a host of Soviet laws, regulations, and secret instructions go into force, often with punitive effect.

Document No. 58 of the Moscow Helsinki Group, dated Moscow, 1 March 1981, signed, among others, by Yelena Bonner, the wife of Andrei Sakharov, mentioned VILCHYNSKAYA Galina Vladimirovna, 23, an Evangelical Christian-Baptist from Brest, Byelorussia, who was arrested in 1979 and sentenced on August 18, 1980 to 3 years in force labor camp.

The Daily Telegraph of London, England, published on June 8, 1982 a letter from Michael Bojarowski, a naturalized Briton, on behalf of this niece, Tamara BOJAROWSKAJA, a Byelorussian Evangelical Christian living in Vilnius, Soviet Lithuania. Because of her religion, Tamara has been barred from visiting her uncle. She has suffered "personal privations, harassments, the loss of her job," and many other inconveniences.

Two scientists were denounced by *Sovetskaya Belorussiya* of June 13, 1982 for dissemination of religious literature during a three-year period: Alexander PIATKEVICH of the Central Board of Statistics, for using the xerox machine at work for "reproduction of books with religious content;" and John Kan of the Minsk Experimental Technological Institute for having officially declared that he "does not believe in anything or anybody except God."

Social pressure, harassment, threats, fines, and imprisonment are applied not only against lay people but also against members of the clergy. Sometimes the authorities punish an outspoken member of the clergy (as in the case of a Russian Orthodox deacon) by pressure exerted by members of the church hierarchy.

Deacon Uladzimier Rusak of Vitebsk was exiled to a monastery for speaking out in his sermon against repressive measures taken by the Soviet government. The

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Professor Thomas E. Bird of Queens College, City University of New York, spoke of the persecution and harassment of believers in Soviet Byelorussia in his testimony before the same Commission (see *Hearings before the CSCE.* Ninety-Sixth Congress, Second Session on Implementation of the Helsinki Accords. Vol. XIV. Religious Rights in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. May 21, 1980. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1980, pp. 55-56, *passim*).

Additionally, a three-page letter on the destruction of church buildings and the harassment of individuals in Soviet Byelorussia for their religious beliefs, signed by Zora Kipel, Secretary of the Byelorussian-American Association, was included in the Senate Report No. 96-1016 (to accompany S. Con. Res. 90) of October 16, 1980, "Expressing the Sense of the Congress with Respect to the Treatment of Christians by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics."

story of Deacon Rusak was reported by the monthly *Bielarus* (No. 311, August 1983), published in New York by the Byelorussian-American Association.

The Soviet Byelorussian monthly *Narodnaja Asvieta* (People's Education) of May 1982 (p. 41) reported that "civic organizations of the Grodno Region have been exposing illegal 'Sunday schools' and groups teaching children the elements of the Catechism."

Priests are sometimes harassed for doing nothing else but fulfilling their spiritual duties, serving the Divine Liturgy or celebrating the Mass. The Komsomol newspaper *Chyrvonaya Zmena* of May 13, 1984 reported that a Roman Catholic priest was "warned" for allegedly "infringing on Soviet laws" on religion. Here is the entire paragraph referring to the "warning."

"It happens, however, in the same town of Radun—in the Grodno Region—that teenagers of 15-17 years of age participate in religious services in the local Catholic church. They even entered the altar and assisted the Reverend Kazimier Shyniawski. This is a direct violation of Soviet laws on religious cults. And it is no accident that the county executive committee warned the priest and the church committee."

There are a number of prisoners in Soviet Byelorussia and many more Byelorussians outside their own Republic in the Soviet Union suffering imprisonment, internal exile, harassment, and discrimination because of their religious views.

The List of Political Prisoners in the USSR (4th edition, as of May 1982, compiled by Cronid Lubarsky in Munich, Federal Republic of Germany) contains the following names of prisoners from Soviet Byelorussia:

Vilchinskaya Galina Vladimirovna, b. Aug. 4, 1958, arrested Aug. 23, 1982.

Dovbun, b. 1958, began serving her 1-year forced-labor term Aug. 17, 1981.

Kukobaka Mikhail Ignatyevich, b. Dec. 3, 1936, arrested Oct. 19, 1978 and later sentenced to 3 years, resentenced in 1981 for another 3-year term.

Kurs Lybov, b. 1932, mother of six, Baptist, began serving a 1-year term of forced labor Aug. 17, 1981.

Rynkevich Iosif Vasilyevich, Orthodox priest.

Silivonchik Galina Vladimirovna, b. July 4, 1937, arrested in 1969, sentenced to 13 years of strict regime in labor camps plus 4 years of exile.

In this climate of persecution and harassment there are reports of people who want to leave the Soviet Union for some democratic country where they would be able to practice freely their religion and where the concept of the separation of religion and state is practiced authentically and honestly.

A group of such people formed a civic committee, called "The Right of Emigration from the USSR." Among the 18 members of the Committee, three individuals come from Soviet Byelorussia: GRIGALCHIK Piotr Antonovich, MARCHUK Piotr Stepanovich, and ZHUSHMA, Vladimir Ivanovich. The Byelorussian woman living in Vilnius, Soviet Lithuania, who has been mentioned earlier, Tamara BOJAROWSKAJA, is also a member of this Committee.

"The Right of Emigration from the USSR" addressed a petition to the Secretary General of United Nations and to the President of the International Association of Democratic Jurists, asking for support in their efforts to leave the Soviet Union. A total of 242 people have signed the document (dated early in 1982 and published in Radio Liberty's *Materialy Samizdata* No. 36/82, November 12, 1982).

Among the signatories 44 are either of Byelorussian nationality or live in the Byelorussian S.S.R. A list of their names is given below:

1. Andranovich Stepan Vasilyevich, family of 5 (Number on the list: 1).
2. Babiak Natalya Grigorievna, family of 3 (#5).
3. Byelaya Maria Mikhaylovna, family of 3 (#11).
4. Bielous Aleksiey Mikhaylovich, family of 10 (#13).
5. Blyshchik Aleksandr Sevostyavnovich, family of 7 (#16).
6. Bojarovskaja Tamara Gavrilovna, single (#22).
7. Vilovchik Vasiliy Vasilyevich, family of 5 (#28).
8. Vilovchik Maria Vasilyevna, family of 2 (#29).
9. Vilovchik Nikolay Vasilyevich, family of 7 (#30).
10. Vilovchik Tatyana Vasilyevna, single (#31).
11. Vovk Nikolay Ivanovich, family of 2 (#33).
12. Vovk Ulyana Konstantinovna, family of 4 (#34).
13. Grigalchik Piotr Antonovich, single (#50).
14. Guretski Nikolay Antonovich, family of 7 (#53).
15. Dyshko Vera Yakovlevna, family of 2 (#62).
16. Zhushma Vladimir Ivanovich, family of 4 (#70).
17. Zhushma Georgi Antonovich, family of 9 (#71).
18. Zhushma Yelena Ivanovna, family of 2 (#72).

19. Ignatovets Klavdia Ivanovna, family of 4 (#80).
20. Koloshuk Sofia Trovimovna, family of 2 (#93).
21. Krukovets Anatoli Fyodorovich, single (#102).
22. Likanchuk Piotr Pavlovich, family of 5 (#114).
23. Litvinenko Maria Mikhaylovna, family of 11 (#115).
24. Litvinchuk Maia Andreyevna, single (#116).
25. Marchuk Piotr Stepanovich, family of 7 (#133).
26. Misiuk Maria Afanasyevna, family of 10 (#137).
27. Misiuk Mikhail Petrovich, single (#138).
28. Moroziuk Vera Mikhaylovna, single (#142).
29. Murka Anatoli Yakovlevich, family of 4 (#146).
30. Murka Andrey Yakovlevich, family of 2 (#147).
31. Murka Yakov Andreyevich, family of 6 (#148).
32. Putsykovich Maria Ioilyevna, single (#176).
33. Romanchik Mikhail Petrovich, family of 11 (#179).
34. Romanchik Pavel Petrovich, family of 7 (#180).
35. Rutkevich Viktor Ivanovich, family of 7 (#184).
36. Sakharchuk Vasili Trofimovich, family of 4 (#188).
37. Sokolovskaya Maria Zakharovna, single, and her neighbor Skrashchuk Maria Ivanovna, single (#196).
38. Solokha Grigori Nikolayevich, family of 10 (#197).
39. Shikula Marfa Andreyevna, single (#233).
40. Shishlo Yelena Nikolayevna (with dependent Kravchuk Anna Petrovna), 2 persons (#234).
41. Shkleda Vasili Kirilovich, single (#235).
42. Yushkevich Liubov Mikhaylovna, family of 6 (#239).
43. Yaromich Yevstafi Andreyevich, family of 11 (#241).
44. Yaromich Ivan Andreyevich, family of 8 (#242).

The CHAIRMAN. Father Bryan Hehir, secretary of the office of international justice and peace, U.S. Catholic Conference, and Anita Bedelis, director of communications, Joint Baltic-American National Committee, have been asked to submit testimony and have agreed to. When they are received, they will be inserted in the record.

[The material referred to follows:]

STATEMENT OF REV. J. BRYAN HEHIR, ON BEHALF OF THE U.S. CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN EASTERN EUROPE AND THE SOVIET UNION

This testimony is submitted on behalf of the U.S. Catholic Conference (USCC), the public policy agency of the Catholic Bishops of the United States. The USCC appreciates the opportunity to analyze again a topic - religious freedom and its status in Eastern Europe - which it has addressed on other occasions. Previous USCC statements include: (1) Statement on Religious Liberty in Eastern Europe (1977); (2) Pastoral Letter on Marxist Communism (1980); and (3) testimony to the House Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations, Religious Freedom as a Human Right (February 10, 1982).

In this testimony I will sketch the relationship of religious liberty to other human rights; examine the content of religious liberty as it is found in Catholic theology; and survey the status of religious liberty in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Lithuania.

I. Religious Liberty as a Human Right

In Roman Catholic thought religious freedom is regarded as both a unique human right and as closely connected with a spectrum of other rights which protect the dignity of the human person.

Religious freedom is unique because of its object; all other human rights, whether political-civil rights or socio-economic rights, have as their object the ordering of human relationships in society. Religious freedom has as its object a person's relationship with God, or to put it another way, the person's quest for religious truth. Precisely because the right recognizes that the human person is called to a relationship beyond the human setting, religious freedom plays a unique role in protecting the person from the claims of state power. To affirm the right of religious liberty for a person is to deny any state the right to claim absolute control of a person's life, the person has a destiny beyond the state, a call to a transcendent relationship which the state is not capable of assessing. The state must provide a zone of freedom within which the person's right to religious liberty can be exercised.

It is precisely when one examines the meaning of the zone of freedom which religious freedom requires that its relationship to other human rights becomes clear. To exercise the right of religious liberty the person must also be guaranteed the right of freedom of conscience, freedom of speech and freedom of association. These other rights are distinct from religious liberty, each has its own basis, content and meaning; but each of them is connected to the right of religious liberty. The relationship between religious freedom and other human rights is a reciprocal one; the demand for religious freedom, understood in its full meaning, leads to a demand for recognition of other rights; these other rights in turn protect and provide the means of exercising the right of religious liberty. The consequence of this reciprocal relationship is that if a state denies the right to religious freedom, it almost certainly will deny other rights as well. If it acknowledges the right to religious freedom, it will be forced to respect other rights also.

Two conclusions follow from this analysis of religious freedom and other human rights. First, our understanding of the meaning of religious freedom should not be isolated from our definition and understanding of other basic human rights; religious liberty is part of the spectrum of fundamental rights which are rooted in and designed to protect the dignity of the human person. This interdependent view of human rights is the way contemporary Catholic theology, as expressed in John XXIII's encyclical Peace On Earth (1963), Vatican II's Declaration on Religious Liberty (1965) and John Paul II's Address at the United Nations (1979), defines the meaning of religious freedom.

Second, religious freedom can have powerful political consequences, especially in situations where a totalitarian or authoritarian state seeks to suppress the rights of the person. Precisely because of its commitment to religious freedom in conjunction with other human rights the Catholic church today finds itself in confrontation with governments of the right and left, from Latin America to Eastern Europe. One cannot understand the church's role in these situations unless one has a clear sense of the full meaning of the right of religious liberty. I will now outline the contents of the right and then look at its relevance to selected cases in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

II. The Content of Religious Freedom

The clearest exposition of the right of religious freedom from a Roman Catholic perspective is found in the Second Vatican Council's Declaration on Religious Liberty. The teaching of the Council is based on the principle that the right of religious liberty has both a personal and social dimension. The personal dimension is usually classified as "freedom of conscience"; the social dimension is "the free exercise of religion". A summary of these two concepts follows:

Freedom of conscience: is the right of each person to be immune from all external coercion in his or her search for God, religious truth and faith. The right is radically personal, but not individualistic; the search for religious truth and the expression of faith calls for a community of faith. Hence freedom of conscience is directly tied to the free exercise of religion.

Free exercise of religion: is the social dimension of the right to religious liberty; the right of free exercise includes three subordinate rights:

1) Ecclesial freedom: the corporate right of religious organizations to internal autonomy. This immunity from legal or political coercion governs issues ranging from the freedom to establish doctrine, through the right to establish schools to the right to communicate with ecclesial communities in other lands. The right to ecclesial freedom is the social counterpart to freedom of conscience and the precise category at stake in many church-state conflicts in the world today.

2) Freedom of religious association: this affirms the right of a person to enter or leave a religious association and the right of persons to form religious associations for charitable purposes.

3) Freedom of religious expression: the right affirms that religious organizations are to be free from coercion in fulfilling activities ranging from worship through public declarations regarding socio-political questions with religious or moral implications.

III. Religious Liberty: Three Cases

A. Lithuania

In examining the case of religious liberty in Lithuania, it is important at the outset to make a fundamental distinction between what the Soviet constitution says about religious freedom and what actually occurs on a daily basis in areas subject to Soviet law and policy.

From the beginning the Soviet government has intervened upon the affairs of the Church in every aspect; from attempting to regulate clergy appointments to controlling the daily minutia of church life.

The Brezhnev Constitution of 1977 (1), provides that "Citizens of the USSR are guaranteed freedom of conscience, that is, the right to profess or not to profess any religion, and to conduct religious worship or atheistic propaganda." (Article 52)

Further guarantees include the prohibition of hostility or hatred on religious grounds (Article 52); freedom of speech, of the press and of assembly, meetings, street processions and demonstrations (Article 50).

These statements fit an acceptable definition of religious freedom but the concern of the Committee is how they are observed.

To illustrate how the Soviet system assaults religious freedom it is useful to focus on the small Baltic Republic of Lithuania, the only predominantly Western-rite Catholic country in the USSR.

Lithuania during her period of independence from 1918-1940, was not subject to Soviet law, and thus developed a fluorishing religious life as a nation released from czarist persecution. Even today, after 40 years of Soviet occupation, 85% of the Lithuanian people are baptized Catholics and two-thirds are practicing Catholics.

With the Soviet invasion of Lithuania in 1940 came the imposition of the anti-religious policy. Although Soviet domination was interrupted by the German occupation of Lithuania from 1941-1944, the full effect of Soviet policy was felt with the return of the Red Army in June 1944.

The incorporation of Lithuania, and her sister Baltic Republics, Latvia and Estonia, are amply documented in the "Baltic States: A Study of their Origin and National Development; Their Seizure and Incorporation into the USSR. Third Interim Report of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression", House of Representatives, Eighty-Third Congress, Second Session, 1954, under the Authority of H.Res. 346 and H.Res. 438.

On July 28, 1976, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian SSR adopted the Regulations for Religious Associations, which had been enacted by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federated Soviet Republic on June 23, 1975. These laws are even more restrictive than the statutes previously in effect in the Soviet Union.

With the advent of the Regulations, the government has assumed an even more invasive role in the life of the Church. The Regulations require that a religious association (congregation) be registered, but application for registration does not guarantee that this will be granted. These same Regulations permit action to be blocked by the local RAYON Executive Committee, the Council of Ministers or the Council for Religious Affairs.

Although 85% of the people of Lithuania are baptized, the 1976 Regulations reaffirm that no one under the age of eighteen is permitted to be a member of a religious association.

The young people of Lithuania are further discriminated against by Par. 17, which denies the right of the church to organize special meetings for youth, and by Par. 18, which restricts the teaching of religion to the sole surviving seminary in Kaunas.

Par. 10 of the Regulations states that believers may receive from the local government, a contract to use, free of charge, a special prayer building and objects intended exclusively for use by believers. Taken at face value, this creates the impression of a benevolent government willing to cooperate with its citizens. However, it must be remembered that the buildings at stake are not new, state-erected chapels, but the ancestral parish churches of the locality, many of them hundreds of years old. All churches have been built by the faithful, but many, as in the cities of Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipeda, Ukmerge and Panevezys, have been confiscated by the government and converted to secular use, without compensation.

Restrictions on the use of churches effectively put religious believers at the mercy of their local governments: A church may be closed by the Council of Ministers of the LSSR solely on the basis of a complaint from a local atheist council that the religious association is breaking the law. No court decision is required.

Permission must be granted from the RAYON Executive Committee for any church repairs; this committee can decide to close the church for the duration of the repairs, or demolish it, as it sees fit, all within the guidelines of the Regulations for Religious Associations.

A church in Soviet Lithuania is not administered by the pastor, but by a governing body elected from the parish membership. However, the RAYON Executive Committee has the right to dismiss any person from that body. For any parish meeting, apart from a worship service, permission must be granted by the Executive Committee.

Religious processions and other out-door ceremonies are allowed only by special permission. In fact, such permission is not given. The organizers of such devotions are liable to arrest, fines and imprisonment. Mecislovas Jurevicius, a laborer, was sentenced to three years of strict regime labor camp for allegedly organizing a procession to the Hill of Crosses, a Lithuanian shrine. Vytautas Vaicunas, an engineer, was sentenced to two and a half years in a general regime camp.

Thus, under the Regulations for Religious Associations, the civil government has deeply entrenched itself in the life of the Church in Lithuania and elsewhere in the Soviet Union.

If the right to "conduct religious worship" as guaranteed in the 1977 Soviet Constitution (Art. 52) has been essentially placed at the pleasure of local government organs by the Regulations for Religious Associations, the freedoms of speech, press, assembly, meetings, street processions and demonstrations (Art. 50), are totally redefined by sections of the Criminal Code of the Lithuanian SSR. (5)

Art. 68 of the Criminal Code states, in part, that, "Agitation or propaganda that seeks to subvert or to weaken the Soviet government or to commit especially dangerous individual crimes against the state or the circulations of slanderous fabrications which defame the Soviet state...the distribution or production or possession of literature for the same purposes are punishable by deprication of freedom...."

Under this article, Father Alfonsas Svarinskas, a member of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights and an outspoken opponent of the Regulations for Religious Associations, was sentenced to seven years strict regime camp and three years of internal exile in 1983. Father Svarinskas, well-known for his repeated demands to the government that believers are guaranteed the same rights as atheists, had been fined numerous times for leading religious processions, and threatened with arrest for allowing minors in his rectory, when a group of children and their parents gathered for a Mardi Gras celebration.

Another priest sentenced under this article is Father Sigitas Tamkevicius, another member of the Catholic Committee. Father Tamkevicius was accused of involvement with clandestine literature (the Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania), sheltering ex-convicts (returned prisoners of conscience) and agitating against the Soviet government in his sermons.

Countless others have been sentenced under Article 68, or others cited in the supporting documents, but the experience of these two men demonstrates that the guarantees of the 1977 Soviet Constitution are virtually worthless when citizens are bound by the

Regulations for Religious Associations and the Criminal Code of the Lithuanian SSR, which allow the government to regulate each aspect of a believer's life, and to neutralize those who insist that their Constitutional rights do, indeed, exist.

B. Czechoslovakia: President Reagan's report of June 1, 1983 to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe on the Implementation of the Helsinki Final Act states: "Church-state relations in Czechoslovakia are widely thought to be the worst in all the East European countries." This is a judgment shared by observers in the Catholic Church.

There has been a relentless campaign since 1950 (briefly moderated by the Dubchek regime) by the Communist government against the Catholic Church. Using the definition of religious liberty outlined in the opening section of this testimony, the attack on the Church has involved both violations of the freedom of conscience of believers and infringements of the free exercise of religion in the Church's public ministry.

The policy directed against the institutional life of the Church is blatant, vigorous and persistent. In a country where over 70% of the population is Catholic, ten of the thirteen dioceses are without a residential bishop. In the Catholic Church lack of episcopal leadership is a fundamental deprivation of ecclesiastical life. It hinders every aspect of pastoral ministry from worship through transmission of Catholic faith to the organization and maintenance of parishes. The struggle over episcopal appointments has been a persistent source of confrontation between church and state.

The policy of obstructing the appointment of bishops is linked to three other policies which directly and substantially impede the ministry of the Church. First, there are limitations placed on the exercise of priestly ministry; the government can deny priests a "license" or civil authorization to fulfill priestly duties. It is estimated that 25% of the priests in Czechoslovakia have been denied such civil authorization to function. Many such priests manage to carry out their ministry in an "underground" fashion, but this is no substitute for a normal ministry.

Secondly, the number of men who are allowed to study for the priesthood is limited annually by the government. In a meeting with five Czechoslovakian bishops in Rome last March, Pope John Paul II specifically called attention to this problem: "With sorrow, it must be pointed out that the number of seminarians does not correspond to the real needs of your dioceses, and that is not because of a lack of vocations but rather because of circumstances that are independent of your will." In 1983 it was reported that the Communist authorities approved only 64 of 94 applicants for entrance to the seminary.

Thirdly, since 1950 there has been a concerted government campaign against religious orders of men and women. In their 1977 Statement on Religious Liberty in Eastern Europe the U.S. Bishops expressed particular concern about the effort of the Czech government to obliterate women's religious orders. The attack on them intensified after the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Information supplied to the USCC in 1979 included the following description:

- Individual sisters and groups of religious women are subjected to intense interrogations and police searches for the sole purpose of intimidating them enough to elicit information.

- Sisters who are retired must live in the Charity Houses of the State. These have been called "concentration convents" by Mr. Cecil Parrott, British Ambassador to Czechoslovakia from 1960-1966.

- In the state institutions where the sisters tend the mentally retarded and aged, they are constantly made aware that they are being tolerated for the time being.

The effect of these measures and others taken against male religious orders has been the dissolution of several religious communities over the past thirty years.

All of these measures are violations of ecclesial freedom, the free exercise of religion. They constitute a conscious policy of the state to impede the essential life and ministry of the Church. In addition to this obstruction of the pastoral life of the Church, there are infringements upon the personal freedom of conscience of the faithful. First, there are practices which interfere with the parents' right to provide for the religious education of their children. The _Pro Mundi Vita_ ecclesiastical research center in Brussels has documented two forms of pressure used to discourage religious education of youth:

- Enrollment: A child who wishes to follow a course of religion has ten days at the start of September to get registered. But the actual dates change every year, and no enrollment is allowed outside this period. The signature of both father and mother are essential; but more than this is involved: certain teachers come to see the parents to dissuade them from enrolling their childrer When the priest of Stati, for example, protested to the local administration, the teachers went back to the parents and asked them to state that they had withdrawn the enrolment of their own free will... The headmaster moreover regularly checks to see that no unenrolled children take part in the religious course.

- Psychological pressure is brought to bear on all those who are connected with the child. District Council deputies intimidate priests who encourage vigorously the enrolment of children. When, in any particular district, the percentage of enrolment exceeds the provincial average, the directors of the school have to ask the teachers (i) to dissuade the children from continuing with their catechesis; (ii) to dissuade the parents by means of the Parents' Association; and (iii) to set up a commission to develop lay education activities.

Secondly, there is a clear pattern of job discrimination based on religious conviction. In the 1970s a concentrated effort was made to keep believers out of teaching positions. In the 1980s the pattern seems to be extending to other occupations like medicine and business.

The Czech and Lithuanian cases, while different historically and in their specific details both exemplify the way in which a government makes a direct attack on the exercise of the right of religious liberty. Religious conflict is not a by-product of other conflicts, it is the battleground where church and state collide.

C. Poland: Perhaps the most well known and well documented church-state conflict in Eastern Europe is the Polish case. Although it has similar features to other East European situations, there are also distinctive aspects to the Polish example. The historical role which the Polish Catholic Church has played as defender of national identity at critical moments in the life of the Polish people has earned the Church a unique role and reputation. This has been further enhanced by the strong leadership of the late Cardinal Wyszynski who forged a united front in the Polish Church which poses a profound moral and political challenge to the government.

The significance of this powerful historical and moral position of the Church in Polish life is twofold. First it gives the Church a very firm basis for resisting attempts by the state to limit the pastoral activity of the Church. These conflicts do occur as in other Eastern bloc countries; in Poland they have been about permits to build new churches, access to the means of communication for the church and various questions touching upon religious education. While the Church must maintain an attitude of vigilance, it is prepared to confront the state from a solid base of policy and public support.

The distinctive feature of the Polish case is the way in which religious liberty serves as a defense of and support for other human rights. The Catholic church's pivotal role in the Polish crisis is included in every analysis made of the Polish situation. Without entering a detailed examination of the political forces at work in Poland, this testimony focuses on the way in which religious liberty establishes the basis for the church's action in the public arena.

The Church in Poland is clearly a religious force, acting as a teacher and mediator in a conflicted situation. Its right to speak is rooted in the social meaning of religious freedom - the free exercise of religion. The Church uses this right to be a voice raised in defense of the human person.

The Church's defense of the person moves it to address those restrictions or suppression of rights which are essential for human dignity. It is in this context that the Church has opposed the imposition of martial law and specifically has supported the right of laborers to organize in free trade unions. The Polish case illustrates the interdependence of rights; because of the Church's social conception of religious freedom, it joins the defense and exercise of this right to the protection of other human rights. Today in Poland the institution of the Church and the institution of a labor movement stand together in the name of freedom against the power of the state.

Even after the banning of Solidarity by the Polish government, the Church continues to tie its general position on religious liberty and human rights to specific support for workers and to demands for release of political prisoners. The visit of the Pope to Poland in 1983 best exemplified how the voice of the Church can sustain other claims for human rights beyond religious liberty.

The close ties between the ministry of the Church and the aspirations of the workers in Poland has been illustrated recently when Lech Walesa sent a message from Poland to be made public by Archbishop Bernard F. Law of Boston. The letter was a response to an invitation extended by Washington Charity Dinner to Mr. Walesa to receive the Humanitarian Public Service Award. In his response, explaining why he could not come to the United States, Mr. Walesa commented on the situation in Poland:

> I am familiar with your declaration to help for Poland. I very much regret that I cannot be with you today and thank you personally. Many of my colleagues are in prison, including some already into a third year of imprisonment. I cannot leave as long as they sit behind bars, often fighting for access to fresh air and the chance for a stroll longer than several dozen minutes. I have asked the Archbishop of Boston to read the letter that I am now writing and I will be very grateful for that....
>
> I regard the honor which I have the pleasure to receive today not only as an expression of recognition for me but also as an expression of recognition for the position of resistance to force....
>
> In the three years since the delegalization of Solidarity, that resistance is evident and felt around Poland. Wherever one looks, in rural areas, in the city, in factories, or in schools - the signs of resistance are evident. Although the resistance to force does not bring direct and quick results, it has nevertheless great significance as an expression of internal freedom. It is a constructive action in the matter of the health of the country, surviving a most severe economic crisis and a great crisis of governing....
>
> Social understanding is necessary for the resolution of the Polish crisis. Polish society has always demonstrated good will, in bearing years of mistakes and misfortunes, though innocent itself, and in enduring crisis and privation in peace.
>
> For me it is an obvious matter--I have the obligation to speak out about this--that without a political understanding with society, resolution of the crisis in Poland is impossible, just as it would be in every other country. I thank everyone who understands that, everyone who believes that helping Poland is worthwhile. I thank all of my friends.
>
> In closing, I would like to greet Mr. Chairman and all those who want to listen to my words. I wish all the best to everyone. (The Boston Pilot - June 29, 1984.)

The resolution of the Polish crisis will require several forces; the Church will undoubtedly be one of these forces and in playing its role will illustrate how the right to religious liberty is related to and a support for other basic human rights. The human rights role of the Church is one of the reasons why the state has had to restrain much of the kind of crude harassment of priests and bishops, believers and churchgoers, seminarians and religious orders that goes on in Luthuania and Czechoslovakia and concentrate on preventing the church from exercising its duty to teach and defend Christian principles of social justice and political liberty.

IV. Conclusion

Church-state relations and human rights conditions are not identical throughout Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. I have tried to avoid suggesting that church-state relations are uniformly bad and that there is no hope for improvement. The case of Poland, especially, shows the possibility of some negotiated solutions. Increasing liberalization and the desire for improved East-West relations and trade in countries such as the German Democratic Republic and Hungary point to the desirability of a new assessment of U.S. policy vis-a-vis these countries.

Such an assessment should consider the desirability of a more differentiated policy as between, for example, the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia. In the case of the former, the U.S. might follow the lead of the Federal Republic of Germany in promoting closer relations, extending credits, and encouraging cultural and educational exchanges and tourism. Policy toward Czechoslovakia should remain unchanged, while opportunities could be sought to improve ties with Poland, by, for example, responding to the recent amnesty of political prisoners by lifting the economic sanctions imposed by the U.S. after martial law was declared. In all such initiatives our diplomacy should make it clear that continued improvement in relations will depend in part on the continuation of liberalizing actions in regard to religious liberty and human rights.

STATEMENT OF THE JOINT BALTIC AMERICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE

The Joint Baltic American National Committee is pleased to have the opportunity to make a statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee regarding the persecution of religious believers and the meddling with religious freedom by the governments of the Soviet Union and East European countries. The Joint Baltic American National Committee, which represents the three central Baltic organizations—Estonian American National Council, American Latvian Association, and Lithuanian American Council—maintains a constant interest in human and religious rights, especially with regard to Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Westerners must view religious freedom in the Soviet Union and East Europe not according to official Soviet rhetoric, but by the reality of the situation. A recent article in the Christian Science Monitor (Nov. 18, 1983) states that:

"The Soviet authorities are tightening the screws on national and religious dissent in the Baltic republics: Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The authorities officially admit there are serious 'deficiencies' in the loyalties of the three non-Russian peoples whose independent states were absorbed by the Soviet Union more than 40 years ago."

Despite the frequency of articles taking similar stands in the Western press, there have been instances when prominent religious figures, such as the Reverend Billy Graham, have visited the Soviet Union and returned to the West, publicly announcing that religious freedom abounds in the U.S.S.R.

Granted, The Constitution of the Soviet Union guarantees freedom of conscience and religions for all, and citizens have the right to follow any religious denomination, if they so choose. The Soviet press also seems to emphasize that the Soviet government does not obstruct or meddle with the inner functions of religious instruction.

However, mounting evidence from credible samizdats, underground publications, indicates that the Soviet authorities, namely the KGB along with the Soviet prosecutors, are the main source of persecutions and prosecutions of Jewish, Moslem, Catholic, Protestant, and other religious dissidents.

In a petition to the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, defending believer's rights, 68 priests of the Archdiocese of Vilnius, Lithuania and one from the Diocese of Kaisiadorys risked their lives by stating:

"In truth, it is precisely the Soviet government who finally decides who may study at the seminary and work as a priest; they decide on the quota for seminarians, they do not allow bishops to act independently, and they interfere with papal appointments of suitable new bishops for the Church." (Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, January 6, 1984, No. 61.)

Another response to such practices, specifically a reaction to the imprisonment of two Lithuanian Catholic priests, was a petition containing 123,000 signatures, 22 of which were signed in blood. The petition, addressed to Yuri Andropov, requested the release of Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevicius. As two of the founding members of the Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believer's Rights, the priests were arrested in 1983 because of their active participation in monitoring religious persecution. The sentencing of Fathers Svarinskas and Tamkevicius to prison for religious activities is of significant importance as it is the first time in 12 years that religious leaders in predominantly Roman Catholic Lithuania have been arrested and prosecuted. A delegation traveled to Moscow to present the petition on behalf of Fathers Svarinskas and Tamkevicius to Prosecutor Utkin, and on June 24, 1983, the same delegation visited the Prosecutor of Lithuania, Jurgis Bakucionis. According to the Lithuanian Information Center:

"Prosecutor Bakucionis emphatically refused to release Father Svarinskas or to drop charges against Father Tamkevicius, who had not been tried. Both priests received 10 year terms."

Estonians and Latvians are also subject to harassment for their religious beliefs. Estonians Alar Kune, Jaanus Pihiligas, Jaam Tomming (Lutheran activists), and Alan Alajarn (Catholic activist) received psychiatric sentences for their staunch religious opinions. Latvians Janis Royhalus and Janis Veveris (Baptists) have been accused and faced imprisonment for merely possessing religious and human rights documents.

The list of such religious presecutions, prosecutions, and human rights violations continues to grow. The number of incidents involving the infringement of religious rights are in the tens of thousands. The information from the various samizdats keeps arriving at a constant rate with the same message:

"You, our free brothers and sisters, are our mouth piece to the free world. You must not cease to inform the world of what is being inflicted upon us here behind the Iron Curtain, for it is from your efforts that we get our strength to survive."

The Joint Baltic American National Committee urges the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to analyze and to become better acquainted with the most recent information receieved from the Iron Curtain on activities of persons seeking to exercise their religious rights and beliefs as accorded by the Helsinki Final Act, the Soviet Constitution, and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

The CHAIRMAN. We will submit additional questions for the record for some of the witnesses who testified today. And I want to express the deep appreciation, on behalf of the committee, for your thoughtfulness in providing to us an update on an extraordinarily important matter. We hope the dissemination of this report throughout the world and particularly to American interested and concerned parties, organizations and groups, will help focus attention on something that we should never lose sight of.

We cannot take for granted our own religious freedom. We cannot conceive of that unless we are working without cessation to see that that same privilege is accorded to others, and many times it is accorded in accordance with international documents, solemnly signed and totally ignored by the signatory nations.

Without further business, this meeting is adjourned.

[Additional questions and answers follow:]

MR. NOWAK'S RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

Question 1. In March of this year, the press reported that the Polish minister in charge of religious affairs indicated a willingness to establish full diplomatic relations with the Vatican. Will this occur? What benefits would that have for the Polish Government? For the Catholic Church?

Answer. Negotiations between the Holy See, the Polish Episcopate and the Polish Government on the establishment of full diplomatic relations with the Vatican are making little progress. The Vatican has made relations conditional on granting the Polish Church full legal status. At present, the Church cannot even have its own bank account. It is not certain that the Soviet Union would allow it. Moscow tolerates grudgingly the present powers and freedoms of the Polish Church, but the Soviets would probably consider any legal sanctioning of a deviation from the orthodox model as a challenge to their fundamental dogmas. Both the regime and the Church would like to have diplomatic relations for different reasons. The government hopes that the presence of a Papal Nuncio in Warsaw will enhance its prestige in the country and abroad. The Pope would like to have a representative in Warsaw to exert to greater personal influence on the Polish Church.

Question 2. Students at a rural agricultural college in Poland made news this spring when they undertook peaceful demonstrations to retain crucifixes in their classrooms. The crucifixes had been ordered removed by Polish authorities. Do you believe that this incident demonstrates the depth of religious intensity among Polish Catholics? Did the Polish Government regret its order to remove the crucifixes after facing the student demonstration?

Answer. There is no doubt that the outcome of the struggle to retain crucifixes in schools ended in the victory of the Church, which very wisely allowed the government to save face in a compromise. The regime chose to retreat from its previous position under non-violent pressure from the school children rather than to face the risk of spreading the conflict to the entire country. The incident demonstrates not only the intensity of religious feelings and the power of the Church but also its moderation and restraint.

RIGHT REVEREND DR. BUTOSI'S RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

Question 1. The State Department's human rights report for 1983 discusses the "basic community" movement within the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary. What is the approximate size and significance of this group, what are its goals and is there any change in their treatment either by the church or the government?

Answer. I think the State Department's report is correct as far as it goes. The basic community movement within the Roman Catholic Church may not be significant in size (hard to estimate the size of an "underground" movement), but significant enough in attitude, theological posture and ecclesiastical relationship. The issue is this: how should a church respond to the judgment of God? The answer of Protestant church leaders in Hungary was that the church must repent when God judges and true repentance must be manifested in obedient acts of reparation; thus they reached a concordat with the Communist State. The Roman Catholic Church achieved this posture only with Cardinal Lekai who is severely critcized for his "accommodation" with the State and accused of being dogmatic and "collaborationist." The basic community movement builds on this sentiment on the one hand, and advocates conscientious objection to military service on the other hand. Thus it stands in confrontation with both church and state.

Question 2. You mentioned briefly the fact that religious division in Romania corresponds with ethnic and linguistic divisions. What denominations do the members of the Hungarian minority belong to and what is the relative size of these denominations?

Answer. Since census and statistics compiled by Romania are inaccurate and manipulated, researchers have difficulties to estimate numbers. However, it is fair to say that of the 2.5-3 million Hungarians in Romania, slightly over 1 million belong to the Reformed-Calvinist Church, about 1 million to the Roman Catholic Church. The Unitarian Church has about 70,000 Hungarian adherents, the Lutheran Church about 30,000, and the Baptist, Neo-Protestant groups perhaps another 30,000.

Question 3. An important point in your testimony is the fact that the minority churches are the last institutions that the minorities can call entirely their own and, therefore, they have important cultural functions to fulfill beyond ministering to the spiritual needs of the minority believers. What are these cultural functions and how much are the minority churches allowed to do in this area?

Answer. If under culture we mean the concepts, habits, skills, art, instruments, institutions, etc. of a given people; the training, refining, developing of the mind, emotions, manners, taste, etc. of the same; and the result of this complex endeavor—then the minority churches are trying to do all this! Take language, for example. While the use of the Hungarian language is forbidden or restricted in society, the churches have Hungarian services and intend to have until they live. In the churches the Hungarian minority nation finds its identity, the values of the past, the strength for the present, and the hope for the future. Of course, the Communist State tries to restrict and curtail the cultural functions of the churches, but they are so much interwoven with the spiritual functions as body and soul in our human life.

Question 4. To what extent are the minority churches allowed to provide religious instruction for children and are they allowed to do it in the Hungarian mother tongue of the children?

Answer. Of course, we talk about Romania, and even in Romania not about the public schools where not only religion is forbidden, but even the use of the Hungarian language! (The Amnesty International Report lists shocking facts along these lines!) The Communist ideology considers religion a private matter, and accordingly religious education is relegated to the home and the church. But in reality, even in the homes and churches religious education is greatly hindered. If the homes really produce Christian characters, woe to the parents! In the churches religious instruction must be conducted in the parish house, the instructor, however, cannot use blackboard, textbook, or even the Bible, neither are the children allowed to make notes. With the exception of a liturgical calendar, the church cannot publish books, magazines or other religious material. To my knowledge, the use of the mother tongue is also looked upon with disfavor in Hungarian Reformed religious education.

Question 5. What are the possibilities for the churches in Hungary and Romania, respectively, to maintain active contact with their sister churches in the West without government interference and harassment? To what extent are they permitted to receive material aid from their sister churches?

Answer. There is a vast difference between Hungary and Romania in this respect. Hungary can and does maintain active contract with sister churches in the West without embarrassing governmental interference: mutual visits, scholarships, conferences, aid, magazine exchange, etc. are all possible and practiced. Not so in Romania. Only selected persons can receive religious books or magazines from abroad, and even they cannot receive them without censorship! Church delegates from abroad, visiting Romania, are not allowed to meet with colleagues freely; they cannot stay in their friends' homes for the night; every citizen having conversation with a foreigner is obligated to make voluntary written report to the police on the subject discussed within 24 hours. However, the most inhuman restriction occurred in 1977 when an earthquake seriously damaged 80 Reformed churches and 16 parsonages, and only through the strong actions of Senator Abraham Ribicoff were we able to send aid to them. To send material aid to churches of the Hungarian minority is still difficult, if not impossible through official channels!

Question 6. What is the situation of the seminaries in Hungary and the seminaries of the minority churches in Romania. What are the problems, if any, of the training of young priests to replace those who retire because of old age?

Answer. In regard to Romania I have dealt with this question in details in my written report; perhaps I can add here the miserable physical condition of the Cluj Protestant Theological Institute (is it left in disrepair because through the quota system they plan to discard the whole Institute?); also the persistent reluctance to send theological students to Western seminaries . . . We have to demand the abolishment of the quota system in Romania.—As far as Hungary is concerned, there is no restriction in admittance or recruitment. However, the ex-mission practice (commissioning theological students to congregations before they finish their seminary education) raises serious questions.

Question 7. What can be learned from the existence of relatively less state interference in the churches of Hungary? Can the examination of the experience of organized churches in Hungary reveal particular steps that could be taken to encourage religious freedom in other Warsaw Pact states?

Answer. This is a difficult question. Because not even the Hungarian situation is evaluated as positively as the question may indicate. For example, there are persons and organizations which resent that S. Con. Res. 119 does not condemn Hungary in the same vein as other Warsaw Pact nations are condemned; they are convinced that the sophisticated form of state control in Hungary which has successfully compromised and coopted the leaderships of every major religious group, but continues to persecute the evergrowing number of religious people who refuse to cooperate in the destruction of religious independence and the denial of freedom of thought—is just as wicked as the other Warsaw Pact systems, even though it has succeeded in convincing a large portion of Western public opinion of its tolerance and liberalism in religious matters. I personally feel that those who see only negative factors on the Hungarian religious scene are just as theologically unseasoned as those who see everthing in rosy colors. A church can be healthier under adverse conditions than in comfortable circumstances! All depends on faith and obedience . . . Add to this, that what "works" in Hungary, does not necessarily "work" in Poland or Romania . . . Thus I can say only one thing: the church and state tension will not be solved satisfactorily until the kingdoms of this world will be the kingdom of our Lord. In this hope we should pray and work everywhere.

MR. HVASTA'S RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

Question 1. Reportedly, there is a religious revival, especially among youth, in Czechoslovakia. What do you think are the roots of this development?

Answer. Under every authoritarian rule in past history one can always note periods of extreme pressure on its subjects followed by periods of relaxation. No society can endure for long with such safety valves or as Lenin said, "the step back" (though he followed his thesis with "to come out with two steps forward as soon as possible"). In the situation with the Czech and Slovak populations the era of relaxation came when Dubcek was named General Secretary of the Party, in January of 1968. His "Communism with a human face" proved to be for real. Senseless persecution of its citizens ceased. Jails were emptied. Churches were once again filled and the clergy resumed their rightful authority * * * slowly, in effect feeling that it was too good to be true—under that "system" (because Dubcek had no intention of changing the system * * * merely making it more humane).

So it was also that the churches and faithful of the Greek Catholic (or Byzantine Rite) Church, which was stripped of its two bishops and the majority of its clergy in the early 1950's, were now given a chance to choose their future status. Over 95 percent voted to have their churches returned to the former Catholic position * * * after almost two decades of controlled-Orthodoxy.

During those two decades there were thousands upon thousands of martyrs—bishops, clergy, and religious who suffered and died in various prisons and concentration camps for their faith. When Soviet tanks rolled into Slovak and Czech territory on August 20th, 1968, to crush Dubcek's experiment with the Human Face, popular resentment against the system was at it's pitch—embracing even the majority of the card-carrying Party members. It never ebbed—though it may have been subdued. After Dubcek's downfall the Party was purged and new vassals assumed power * * * more palatable to Moscow's need.

Husak, Dubcek's successor is still considered one of the most staunchest executor's of the Soviet system—at times even more ruthless than those dictating from the Kremlin.

And, no doubt, the slowly developing Solidarity movement in Poland offered the Slovak nation as it's next door neighbors, an example of what people can do in unity—such as Church Groups in Poland. (Most citizens can travel to other Socialist countries without much problem.)

When the restraints became harsh—through renewed arrests of clergy (Franciscans, etc.) as well as a number of young people who were beginning to assume leadership to fight oppression and denial of the Helsinki human rights accords, whose influence was slowly penetrating into Czechoslovakia, the regime reacted with it's "two step forward" dictum of even stronger repressive measures.

And, action begot reaction—particularly among the young. They did not fear arrests because they did not live through the brutal Stalin Era of total decimation of opposition. They also saw a bold example of what the Polish nation was accomplishing. It was an "infection for freedom."

Young people, especially, are attracted to dramatic and heroic dare—adventures. When the Secret Police reacted in harsh manner in late 1983 and April 1984, more and more the youth began to feel that they were their brothers supporters, and openly protested in front of state courts where the young "Religious Revivalists" were being tried on charges of "spreading religious progaganda inimical to the interest of state * * *".

To sum up, Senator, the "roots" of every religious revival are in the yearning of every people to seek a more perfect world. When one is hampered is this quest because of governmental obstruction, one may become more and more determined to try and achieve that which is being denied—basic God-given freedom. In this, Religious Freedom is one of the most important. It's the last vestige where the most downtrodden can find refuge. And no matter how often it is stifled, it will no doubt keep "reviving."

Question 2. At the beginning of 1983, a new director of the Secretariat for Religious Affairs was appointed in Czechoslovakia. Has the Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia faced more obstacles under the reign of Vladimir Janku, the new director, than it did under his predecessor?

Answer. Unfortunately, in Czechoslovakia, there are no objective "Who's Who" where one could get the background on a official or a VIP. And, anyone the regime choses to replace another (who may have misappropriated funds which were destined to be used to embarrass further the "Pacem In Terris" functionaries), can be safely considered a lackey of the State. One must also consider the after-effects of such individual's actions. It was he, no doubt, who sanctioned the wide spread arrests of the Franciscans. And it is he who is still in charge of the most repressive of Eastern Bloc regimes violating the basic human rights of its citizens. The Czech and Slovak American leadership, still looks with hope to better conditions for the Church, but, it is difficult to conceive that this can come about before the Government of Czechoslovakia begins to respect human rights for all it's citizens—particularly those to which they agreed in signing the Helsinki accords.

It is really most difficult for us as Americans to understand the reality which exists in most of the communist countries. With the constant drum of propaganda against "capitalism" and "Western imperialism, which is momentarily trying to destroy the world * * *" it is easy for the Communist leadership to maintain a tight grip on every facet of one's life. Everything becomes of concern and of vital interest to the State. To go against the wishes of the State is culpable and there are no independent writers (nor independent newspapers) * * * no objective judges * * * no anything that would challenge the supreme authority of the State and it's Spokesman. To challenge that authority and succeed—would mean the destruction of that System, which has no provisions for change or modification as does the United States Constitution, referred to as "living constitution". Consequently, everything is rigidly controlled including the work and dictums of individuals like the newly appointed Mr. Vladimir Janku; though, one can promote a more humane way to implement their system as Mr. Dubcek sought. And, we look to seeing such "humane" methods implemented by Mr. Janku.

Question 3. What potential does the Catholic Church have to develop the kind of political influence in Czechoslovakia that it now has in Poland?

Answer. The potential of the Catholic Church—primarily in Slovakia and Moravia because it is based on the inherently strong popular and historic feeling—is evident, though subdued because it is "split." In Czechoslovakia you have three basic nations—Czechs, Moriavians and Slovaks. Each came through a different historic development—the Czechs and Moravians were under the Germanic tutelage; while the Slovaks were under Hungarian domination for over a millenium. The Czech lands developed at a quicker pace—particularly its cities and Prague became the center of early European liberal thought. Moravia and Slovakia were more agrarian and the local parish priest or minister was an important thought-moulder in the community. This inherent outlook, the "roots" of each nation persists even today. In Moravia and Slovakia by and large the roots of their faith are deep-seated and the populations are committed to their religious beliefs * * * primarily Catholic and about 25 percent Lutheran.

Consequently, the strong Polish influence of the Church is felt—even from its own press which criticizes the Poles, as well as from broadcasts of Voice of America (even though it is very minimal in terms of purely religious programs). There is also a very sizeable commitment of the young people—particularly the university and young professional ranks—who have learned from the Polish experience that they need to confront the Secret Police and even the government to ask them to practice what they preach. They bring to light the Constitution of the Czechoslovak Republic which guarantees the basic freedoms—on paper. Now, the young are challenging the Government to guarantee those freedoms in reality. And, they are willing to go to jails for their beliefs—to be able to PRACTICE their religion freely, without police interference. The figure of Pope John Paul II is no doubt a very strong influence and this is one of the reasons why the Czech regime is so adamantly against his visiting Czechoslovakia.

Question 4. Are Protestant religious believers and clergy subject to the same kind of harassment and persecution as Catholics?

Answer. Basically yes, all religious orders and organizations are anathemas to communism. Those which are best organized—such as the Catholic Church with mass appeal were the first to feel the brunt to brutal decimation. The second largest Church was the Evangelical or Lutheran with some 25 percent following. Since there was no outside influence (as with the Catholic Church from Rome) the suppression of the Lutheran Church was less brutal—aimed at only the most vocal opponents of Regime's dictums.

Other than the Catholic Church the Jehovah's Witnesses were viciously suppressed mainly for their pacifist beliefs. They refused to serve in the armed forces.

Question 5. After the Vatican's decree of March 8, 1982, which circumscribed political activity by priests, many priests withdrew from the pro-government organization known as "Pacem in Terris." What is the current status of this organization? How has it affected the activities of the Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia?

Answer. The Vatican decree declared "participation in political organizations by priests" as forbidden and the "Pacem in Terris" was specifically cited as a "political organization."

It was a severe blow to the Regime. In the Soviet Union the Russian Orthodox Church is plagued with a similar "State controlled" association. At first the Prague Regime forbade its publication or pronouncement by the Bishops from the pulpits. Following on that were threats that an "independent National Catholic Church" would be established unless the Vatican decree was withdrawn. A barrage of accusation against the Pope was orchestrated including that he was willing to support the Solidarity Movement which is a "political organization" (worker's union), and not a "peace" movement.

Negotiations with the Vatican ceased. But, many priests withdrew from the state-controlled organization—losing their licenses, going underground. There were hunger strikes of Seminarians in the few seminaries still permitted with the "culprits" evicted and either sent to work camps or dismissed. A campaign against the "secret church" operation was initiated with trained provocateurs ordered to infiltrate the underground church.

The campaign is still being pursued although it varies when the regime needs to flex its muscles against the Church.

Presently, "Pacem in Terris" is in the state of that Communist professed tactic of Lenin, with the "one step back—as a tactical move—before one can move two steps forward." No doubt it has divided the Catholic Church because many non-discriminating followers continue to go to Pacem in Terris priests, while the majority would not trust them, fearing that what they confess to such a priest might wind up on the desk of the political commissar the next day.

Question. 6. For more than 10 years, the Vatican and the Czecholslovak Government have been unable to agree on candidates for the 10 bishoprics that are vacant in Czechoslovakia. What are the major obstacles to agreement?

Answer. Our record shows that since the early 1950's when Bishop's Vojtassak of the Trnava Diocese, Bishop Michal Buzalka of Bratislava, Bishop Pavel Gojdic of the Greek Catholic diocese of Presov and his successor Bishop Basil Hopko were arrested, only in the Slovakia their dioceses were never filled—that is over 30 years.

In the Czech dioceses the situation is not any better. The main problem is which is better—to have these seats filled by people who have so compromised themselves in the eyes of the faithful as to do every bidding of the Communist regime, or, let them remain vacant as symbol of Communist intransigence. The Holy See has capable and worthy priests which it has (secretly) appointed to these vacant dioceses—which has been the province in every civilized country. Yet, the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia refuses to recognize them and insists on filling those vacancies with its own list of "Pacem in Terris" servants.

In substance it is the refusal of the Communist government in Czechoslovakia to permit the Catholic Church to name its own bishops. The Communist government wants to control the Church—as it does—from paying every priest the monthly stipend to controlling every aspect of church activity through "licensing" of all priests. When one is not licensed and continues to say Mass, meet with people for purposes of religious education he or she (as with nuns) is committing an illegal act punishable under existing Czechoslovak laws. It is the most repressive of all Communist regimes of the Soviet System.

Question. 7. Has the "Secret Church"—that is, priests and bishops who have not been approved by the state but are sanctioned and "blessed" by the Vatican and conduct services in private—spread so widely that it could be regarded as the mainstream?

Answer. When the repression of the clergy and faithful becomes intense—then one can characterize that the "secret church" or better said, "suppressed church" can be considered as the "mainstream." But, by and large there has been room for the nip-and-tuck between the faithful clergy and the government-controlled Pacem in Terris priests not to feel that the church must go underground in order to exist. There is enough of a groundswell of public opinion and pressure from the youth, now getting more and more involved, to prevent that schism.

Because every priest or minister has to be licensed by the Czechoslovak regime in order to be permitted to carry on his ecclesiastical responsibilities, the total control over each is Total. In effect the priest is an "employee" of the openly aetheistic government who is paid to perform his ecclesiastical duties by that same government. The license can be withdrawn—as it has been to many priests who refuse to be mere puppets of the regime—or, the regime can tolerate a priest who has strong backing of his faithful. The regime realizes that to submit every priest to their dictims would require a whole army to constantly harrass its own citizens. Consequently, "examples" of individuals are publicized who have failed to conform to govermental edicts on "religious freedom" and the lack of it.

The "unlicensed church" is becoming more aware of its position as the necessary fact of religious life. When the young feel the need to hear Mass or a spiritually-uplifting sermon, they do not want to be shadowed by some political informer. Throughout the world many people feel the need for reflection into the religious experience and particularly in areas where local circumstances prevent that individual the freedom to express oneself. A human being needs that outlet . . . to delve into the spiritual; to talk with others about it and to feel a sense of rebirth (in a sense to be "born again") when the pressure of daily life becomes too great to bear. In Czechoslovakia that "meeting with other persons"—especially an unlicensed priest—becomes an act of illegality. The fear of the regime that every citizen is plotting against it is so ingrossed in the laws the government passes—against its own citizens—that the paranoia borders on insanity at times. It's Lenin's thesis about vigilance and all party functionaries had to pass the exam to "root out all enemies of the State."

Question 8. Last month, Cardinal Frantisek Tomasek, the Roman Catholic primate of Czechoslovakia, spoke out very boldly for greater Church rights and religious freedom. He also formally invited Pope John Paul II to visit Czechoslovakia next year. How has this invitation been handled? What can you tell us about Cardinal Tomasek's campaign, its effects, its prospects?

Answer. The invitation to Pope John Paul II to visit Czechoslovakia, extended by Cardinal Frantisek Tomasek, the Czech primate of Prague was a simple act of commemorating the 11 centuries of the death of St. Methodius. It was Methodius, who together with his brother in Christ, St. Cyril brought Christianity to early Slavs translating the scripture into the Cyrilic alphabet (old Slavonic) still used today by the Byzantine Rite Catholics. It was a fitting gesture.

In response the faithful throughout the Czech and Slovak areas joined in a petition-signing campaign asking the Pope to come and visit their land. Notwithstanding the severe pressure against the aging Cardinal and brutal police methods used against the organizers of the petition-signing—which has become a massive campaign (who wouldn't want to invite the most charismatic Pope to his country?)—over 20,000 have signed openly—with millions of others who no doubt would support such a visit.

If the groundswell becomes intense—but, one must remember that everything, every act under communism is viewed from the political and security perspective and this act is directed against the Communist system because the Pope would (unlike some other Western religious) certainly not glorify that system if he would be permitted to visit Czechoslovakia. Thus the Campaign is doomed * * * unless Western press would spotlight it, "spokesmen" embarrassing the regime into permitting the Pope's visit.

We understand that Hungary, that is Hungarian church authorities are in the process of extending an invitation to the Pope as is Yugoslavia.

Question 9. Three state offices for Church affairs—a federal office, an office for the Czech lands and an office for Slovakia—provide the machinery for state regulation of religion. Licenses, forced early retirement, and closings of theological seminaries are only a few examples of the restrictions imposed by these offices. With so many restrictions, what religious functions may the clergy perform? What practices are believers allowed to follow?

Answer. Since the main aim of any Communist government is to stamp out the "opiate of the masses" (meaning religion) it is quite difficult to reason with the Government to permit the basic practice which it has been instigated to "stamp out."

In Catholic theology and practices based on the Scripture the "You are a priest forever * * * according to the order of Melchizedek" is taken as a serious vow. Once ordained, a priest can only be prevented from fulfilling his duties in time of extreme hardship, or, when he is excommunicated. Thus the "licensing" of priests by any governmental authority is contrary to basic civilized statutes such as Helsinki Accords or the earlier agreements among nations of the Atlantic Charter. To restrict a member of the clergy—duly recognized in worldwide association—is tantamount to harassment and denial of his constitutional right—right of free speech, assembly, etc.

In Czechoslovakia an "unlicensed" priest may only pray by himself, and even then, only by himself. To those who are fighters for basic human rights—it is unfathomable to witness the denial of such basic human rights.

The faithful are really in no better shape. They can go to church to pray, but they cannot associate with anyone after church to talk about the sermon, or any facet of religion with an "unlicensed" priest. They cannot meet in homes for the purpose of religious instruction—lest it be viewed as "conspiracy against the state." And, religion is viewed as anti-state activity because of the revolutionary nature of the ideology of communism.

Question 10. Why have the Soviet and the Czechoslovak Governments severely repressed the Byzantine or Greek Catholic Church?

Answer. Part of the reason is a historical fact. The Greek Catholic Church is almost identical to the Orthodox—in its liturgy, basic beliefs (changed somewhat with specific beliefs about the role of the Trinity and few minor aspects). But, the major difference is that the Greek Catholic Church is "In Union with Rome", i.e. it is part of the Universal Great Catholic Church directed from the Vatican, with Pope John Paul II as its Head. The Soviet system cannot fathom anything that does not owe its total allegiance to the State. And the Russian Orthodox Church has been under the Tsars—though under a very different arrangement no doubt—and primarily under the Soviet Communist system totally under Kremlin's control, notwithstanding a few good souls who try to survive performing their true eccliastical duties sincerely.

Nevertheless, the Greek Catholics who have flourished after World War I in Poland, Eastern Slovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Yugoslavia were severely repressed once Communists seized control of the countries. The reason is very obvious:

the Moscow-dominated Orthodox Church hierarchy wanted to dominate the "renegates" and suppress the leaders—which as you can see from my previous notes, they certainly did with great vigor. In Slovakia the only two bishops—Gojdic and his successor, Vasil Hopko, were savagely mistreated after their arrests. I was in cell no. 56, in Leopoldov fortress in the spring of 1950 when I personally saw Bishop Hopko brought in, half stooped, holding his stomach, pale and gaunt from all the mistreatment he was subjected to. And, this was after the severe interrogation to which he was subjected. All of us looked in horror. And, we had been used to seeing horror in the prisons where we had been. This was the most severe example of "man's inhumanity to man" I had seen during my 5 plus years in various prisons in Czechoslovakia, as an American.

The Soviet leadership, no doubt, has an intense hate for the Byzantine, or Greek Catholic Church, no doubt because it considers it a renegate from the Orthodoxy (even though it has existed for many, many years).

In Czechoslovakia, rumors had it that the Byzantine Rite part was going to be annexed into the Soviet Union . . . and such stories still circulate, instilling fear into the population. It was only during Dubcek's short-lived era that the Greek Catholic Church was re-established and their former churches were returned from their almost 20-year "occupation" by Moscow-controlled orthodoxy.

The present situation is "stable" because it would provoke more problems than the regime needs—to return those churches to Orthodoxy, once again. The majority of the faithful—rather than go to the Soviet-ordered orthodox churches went instead to the Roman Rite churches. It was obvious that when over 95 percent voted to return to their old Greek Catholic status, the sentiment is very, very strong for the Greek Catholic faith. In fact, Bishop J. Fulton Sheen years back said that he wanted to be the first to say Mass in the Byzantine or Greek Catholic Rite Church—in Moscow, when Russia was converted! There are about 1 million Greek Catholics in Czechoslovakia—just about the same as in the United States. In the States, there are six bishops and an Archbishop to tend to our flock. In Czechoslovakia there are none—only an Administrator, an aged saintly priest.

DR. GORDON'S RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

Question 1. Recent reports suggest that there is a spiritual revival in some East European states and the Soviet Union. What do you think are the causes of this revival?

(a) What response do you anticipate from the affected governments?

Answer. The spiritual revival in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is best understood in terms of the increasing number of people, particularly in the college-age bracket, who have re-discovered the transcendent qualities of the Jewish or Christian faiths. So far as the Christian church is concerned this revival is characterized by the following:

(a) A strong personal commitment to Jesus as Lord.

(b) A recognition of the great difference between being a Christian and being a Communist. The latter is regarded as anti-Christ because of its denial of God and its belief that "scientific materialism" is the only truth.

(c) A personal involvement in the Christian community with a strong sense of fellowship and the corresponding personal loyalties that go with it.

(d) A sincere desire to study the Bible, traditional theology and the great literature of the Christian period of their own culture. Along with this desire there is frustration because of the shortage of Bibles and related literature in the vernacular. Those who have been at universities often have succeeded in obtaining English translations through the English department in which they studied. There is also a great shortage of leaders educated in Biblical, historical, and theological studies. The most significant expression, therefore, of the spiritual renewal is the multiplication of Christian study groups or seminars. These, of course, are illegal. When the term underground church is used it usually refers to groups of this nature.

(e) A great interest in the West because of the belief that Westerners share the same world view, and that they are concerned about the plight of the persecuted church in Communist countries.

(f) A desire to serve the people of their own country and to engage in spiritual, but not physical, revolution.

I mention these factors because it is impossible to evaluate the affected government's response without understanding them.

Along with others I know what that response is. For reasons of security I shall not mention names nor countries, but I have learned first-hand of the following responses:

(a) The arrest a year ago of up to 100 Christians who were involved in Christian seminars such as those I have mentioned.

(b) The imprisonment of a physician over a long period in solitary confinement because he shared his faith with a man who had attempted suicide after his arrest. The room where this event took place was bugged.

(c) The daily harassment of Baptists who are known to attend services, particularly those which are regarded as illegal.

(d) The arrests of pastors who show too much enthusiasm for the Gospel. The list of names I have submitted of such people in the Soviet Union indicate the extremes to which the communist government will go to silence Christian leaders. It should be noted, by the way, that most believers are arrested on charges of being political dissidents. Thus, the lists of imprisoned Christians that are available are numerically less than they are in fact.

(e) The dismissal from employment of those who have become Christians.

(f) The arrest and imprisonment of groups supporting a Christian peace movement instead of those initiated by the Soviet Union.

(g) The imprisonment of translators for the samizdat press and those who publish it.

(h) The imprisonment of those engaged in Christian charity.

(i) The imprisonment of those caught teaching the Christian faith to children. This includes the imprisonment of teenagers such as Russian Baptist Galina Vilchinskaya.

(j) The imprisonment of women engaged in caring for the families of religious dissidents.

(k) The persecution of members of the Communist Party who have been converted to Christianity.

(l) The punishment of U.S. citizens who have been caught obtaining information of religious persecution.

(m) The destruction of places of worship.

I anticipate that the intensity of those responses will increase. A number of recent laws and amendments indicate that: Christian leaders presently in prison will be subjected to continuous re-sentencing without hope of ever being released; those who have been released from prison in the past are treated as non-citizens and kept under constant surveillance, subject to arrest at any moment. Anyone who receives funds or gifts from the West is subject to arrest and a sentence of 5 years. (This in fact means that the Russian Social Fund, financed by the royalties of Solzhenitsyn's Gulag Archipelago, will be destroyed, and those involved in its activities imprisoned.) Anyone receiving gifts of Bibles, religious books, etc., may be imprisoned for 5 years.

In my opinion, the people's movement in Poland is evidence of a spiritual revival which causes the shaky foundations of the Soviet empire to tremble. Solidarity provides a model for the inspiration and guidance of those who are given their dignity, and their spiritual freedom as the consequence of their faith. Our monitoring of the Soviet press and journals indicates a high degree of concern over the reality of the religious revival.

Question 2. Religious believers are confined to psychiatric hospitals in the Soviet Union and some of the East European states. In fact the Soviet Union has withdrawn from the World Psychiatric Association because of protests over this issue.

How widespread is this practice in the Soviet bloc?

Answer. The practice of sentencing believers to psychiatric prison hospitals is increasing, particularly for the simple offense of requesting permission to emigrate from the Soviet Union. This freedom of movement is, of course, guaranteed by the Helsinki accords, which were signed by the Soviet bloc countries, with the exception of Albania. The practice depends upon the facilities available in each country. I am glad to say that the American Psychiatric Association challenged this practice over 4 years ago. The practice, however, is in line with the Soviets' move away from the brutalities of the Stalinist era to the subtleties of mind control; a subject which has concerned greatly the research agencies of the Soviet Union.

Question 3. Which churches or religious sects are the most repressed in the Soviet Union? Why?

Answer. The Council of Evangelical Baptist Churches of the Soviet Union, the Pentecostals, Mennonites, Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and any belonging to an unregistered fellowship or group of fellowships are the most repressed Christian groups in the Soviet Union.

The reason is fairly obvious. The episcopal-type churches, such as the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic communions are hierarchial and therefore more bureaucratic. They can be controlled more easily. The freer fellowships are more personal, more independent, more preaching/teaching- and free prayer-oriented, more evangelical, more family-related, more expectant of individual and family involvement, more definite about the separation of church and state, more sensitive to the opposition of the Empire of Caesar, i.e. tyranny, to the Kingdom of God, more emphatic about the obligation of every Christian to witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The consequence of the free church emphasis is the development of a people with extremely strong personalities, intensity of consciousness, great courage, and outstanding compassion. Their existence is a challenge and a threat to Soviet tyranny, its materialistic/mechanistic ideology, its central systems, its dedication to the production of communist subjects, namely the classless and faceless society.

Question 4. Why have Soviet authorities targeted the Evangelical Baptist churches?

Answer. The members of the Council of Evangelical Baptist Churches of the Soviet Union have consistently refused to be identified with the registered Baptist church under the ministry of cults or religion. They defy the control system of this ministry. They are effective. They are a martyr church. They are terribly brave. They are like the early Christians we read about in the Acts of the Apostles. They are committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the absolute authority of the Biblical revelation, the necessity to be the confessing church, the endurance in the faith under persecution, the obligation of parents to be the primary teachers of the faith, the obligation to engage in mission, and to the communication of the Gospel by personal example. With regard to these characteristics it is interesting to recall Solzhenitsyn's admiration, in his book "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch," of his fellow prisoner who was a Baptist and who transcended his physical confinement day by day. Although their numbers are not large their influence is enormous. They have endured over 100 years of persecution, first of all under the old regime of the Tsars, and then under the tyranny of the Soviet Union. During Stalin's extensive murder of peasants beginning in 1929, the Baptists suffered greatly. Survivors moved into the cities, continued their witness and gained many converts. A Soviet journal published last year a tirade against the Baptists because they are engaging in propaganda, which is contrary to the constitution. The article complained that their membership had grown by over 50 percent because of their strategy in the cities. The complaint went on to urge fellow comrades to emulate this strategy in behalf of the true faith of "scientific materialism." There are many indications in the Soviet press of the politbureau's frustration with its inability to control the minds of its citizens. On June 7, 1983, at the plenum of the Central Communist Party in Moscow the late Yuri Andropov stated that, "The struggle [of our times] is for the hearts and minds of billions of people on this planet." The appointment of Chernenko as the leading ideologue reminds us as Andropov has done, that the essential conflict of our times is a spiritual one. In this conflict the Evangelical Baptists are the equivalent of highly disciplined commandos, and therefore a primary target of the Communist powers. Their influence has contributed a great deal toward the present spiritual revival.

Question 5. Have the Evangelical Baptist churches gained adherents from other religions? Why?

Answer. It would be difficult to find statistics to this effect. Yes, the Evangelical Baptist churches have gained converts from those educated to be atheists, from the Russian Orthodox Church, and from other denominations. I have not heard of the conversion of Muslims. I have heard, however, of the conversion of Jews. In this context it is important to remember that the Evangelical Baptists and Jews are regarded as outlaws. The reason for conversion in my estimation is the personal example and dedication of the members, and also that of their strong and compassionate fellowship. They represent an authority which is clearly more personal, more moral, and more intelligent than that of Soviet ideology. I think the influence of the Evangelical Baptists has contributed enormously to the present spiritual revival.

Question 6. Reportedly, 50,000 Christians have expressed a desire to emigrate from the Soviet Union for religious reasons. Do you perceive an increased interest in emigration on the part of Christians in the Soviet Union?

Answer. My observation is based upon general trends which also include exceptions to them. Generally speaking, therefore, members of the Russian Orthodox Church tend to feel committed to witness to their own people within their own land. Father Gleb Yakunin, for example, refused to accept an offer to emigrate because of his conviction to witness to his own people. Shortly after his refusal he was arrested and sentenced to 5 years in a rigorous labor camp, and 5 years internal exile. The

30,000 Pentecostals who appealed to President Carter for help in their desire to emigrate did so because they found that it had become impossible to practice their faith, to teach their children, to worship in public places, to obtain Bibles, to hold prayer meetings, etc. Many Christians who have been or are regarded as leaders and representatives of their faith, become so harassed by hourly surveillance, bugging, etc., that the opportunities of Christian service are denied them.

In my opinion a number of actions, such as the completion of the Helsinki accords in 1975, encouraged Christians to think about the possibility of freedom of worship and witness in other lands. The example of the Jewish community in this respect was influential. Since the mid-seventies, therefore, I do not think the situation has changed radically. There are many Christians who would avail themselves of the opportunity to emigrate if that were offered to them. And there are others who are determined to continue their witness regardless of the cost. Over 2 years ago CREED was instrumental in achieving the release of a recently arrested Christian. After his release the authorities offered him the opportunity to emigrate. This he refused. I cite this as a reminder of those who are choosing not to emigrate.

Question 7. How have Protestant churches fared in Eastern Europe in general?

Answer. Again I have to speak in general terms. In some countries of Eastern Europe Protestant churches have managed to continue and even increase. This is true of countries which have been predominantly Catholic, for example, and where the Catholic Church was regarded as the national one. I am aware of a considerable degree of vitality in the Protestant churches in Poland and Lithuania for example. The Baptist churches, on the whole, show, and have shown, a vitality that has discouraged the authorities because of the increase of their numbers. Where some denominations have chosen to designate themselves as "official" or "registered" there is a renewal movement occurring. There are movements such as that of the Bethanists in the Reformed churches of Hungary and Transylvania in Romania. The recent celebrations of Martin Luther's birth in East Germany have provided the Lutheran and Reformed churches with an added dynamic and an easing up of the restrictions placed upon them. The Protestant Churches in Eastern Europe, therefore, have not fared well physically, but they have been tolerated so long as they do not give evidence of being too aggressive, that is, evangelical. By the word "evangelical" I mean the communication of the Gospel, by word, teaching and example. There is a tension between the Protestants and the governments. Their members are regarded as second or third class citizens. University education is usually denied them, and so are many of the so-called social services.

Question 8. The Soviet Union and Eastern bloc states participate in ecumenical organizations such as the World Council of Churches. Their delegates, however, must often act as diplomats of ther respective governments rather than as representatives of their churches and constituents. Can such organizations make a positive contribution to the promotion and protection of religious freedom?

Answer. Leaders of the World Council of Churches would claim that they are promoting and protecting religious freedom by means of "quiet diplomacy." If this is the case then my impression is that this form of diplomacy is so quiet that its results are never heard. I take the liberty of attaching a speech I made at the annual conference of CREED on November 10, 1983, because it goes into greater detail that I can at this time in illustrating the attempts made by Christians to gain the attention of the WCC regarding the limitations of religious freedom.

When the Russian Orthodox Church first requested membership the then Secretary General expressed the concern that the admission of this communion into full membership would result in it being used as a channel of propaganda, and controls, initiated by the Soviet Union. At the time discussions were taking place between the WCC representatives and those of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Church in the Soviet Union was experiencing one of its worst periods of persecution, i.e. during the tyranny of Nikita Khrushchev. Such persecution was sufficient to cause any thinking person to question the motives of the Russian Orthodox Church. Added to that is the nature of the communion's doctrine of physical, rather than spiritual, apostolic succession. The WCC was then a federation of Protestant churches deemed as heretical. Why then should the Russian Orthodox Church seek membership in a fellowship in which it could have no communion both sacramentally and theologically? Since its admission in 1961 the Russian Orthodox Church, in concert with the representatives of the other denominations of the Soviet bloc, have indeed followed the Party line. They have continuously castigated the sins of the United States, Israel, and the Republic of South Africa. At the same time they have ignored those of the Soviet Union and its colonies. The Soviets' invasion of Afghanistan, e.g. has been "soft-pedalled." The answer to the appeals of the persecuted church has been, "We cannot discuss issues raised outside the ranks of official delegates; neither can we interfere with the internal affairs of other countries, and their churches."

At the moment therefore the WCC is doing substantially very little to further the promotion of religious freedom. In the first place the delegates from the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc are committed to a policy which forbids criticism of the Soviet Union's actions. In the second place it has become an unwieldy bureaucracy incapable of addressing the needs of Christians in the world, speaking in their behalf, and supporting the world mission of the Church. The present Pope is a better representative of Christians in the West than is the WCC.

There is always the hope of reform, however, a reform which must begin within local congregations, assemblies, and national councils. What is at stake is not the bureaucracy of the WCC but the truth of the Gospel and its doctrinal articulation. The more strongly the western denominations affirm their dedication to the promotion of freedom the more they will reinforce the eastern delegates' responsibility to do the same. It is at the level of the WCC that the hypocrisy of the "official" churches is most noticeable. What is required for creative change is the understanding of the Church as the Body of Christ transcending national and ideological limitations in obedience to its only head and authority. In saying this I also realize that the WCC does afford the opportunity of delegates to converse with one another at the personal level where hopefully some form of honest dialogue occurs.

THE WITNESS OF THE PERSECUTED CHURCH IN OUR TIME

Dr. Ernest Gordon

1 John 2:22. "Who is the liar? Who but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is Anti-Christ."

These words tell the truth about our times, just as they told the truth about the struggle of the early Christians in their struggle with Rome and the kingdom of lies. I was reminded of it when I read the following statement. "There is a struggle for the hearts and minds of billions of people on this planet." Who do you think said that; Ronald Reagan, or Winston Churchill speaking from his grave? It was neither. It was none other that Yuri Andropov at a speech he made to the June Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

In reporting the speech Pravda urged its readers to do everything to immunize fellow comrades against hostile ideas. Religion was maintained as the greatest danger and the obvious source of such ideas.

This theme of religion as the source of hostile ideas is a constant one. It is repeated regularly in Soviet publications, e.g. a report by a Doctor of Jurisprudence enlarging upon Article 52 of the Soviet Constitution, dealing with tolerance: "Under socialism religion persists in certain areas of personal life . . . and in certain people's minds. At the same time, a number of religious organizations are stepping up their activity and a heightened interest in religion can be observed . . . The cultivation in citizens of a scientific-materialistic outlook is a component part of the complex task of molding the new man." (July 7, 1983) "It is necessary to improve the methods of atheistic propaganda, make it more effective and intensify the struggle for human souls and for a scientific-materialist world view . . . Religion is at variance with the moral values of the Soviet way of life." (August 7, 1983)

At the same Plenum of last June, at which Yuri Andropov spoke about the struggle for the minds of billions, Comrade Chernenko challenged the Central Committee of the Communist Party to root out the causes of "sectarian religiosity" and find "means of overcoming them."

A lengthy article dated June 23rd spells out in some detail the unlawful practices of Christians. It deplores their missions in cities, particularly those of the Evangelical Christian Baptists who have increased by 50% in the cities, and it condemns the Baptists for "counteracting secularism."

A report on Belorussia states that, "Since the late 50's, priests and ministers were said to have stepped up their activities in violation "of laws concerning the relationship between church and state." In response, the Communist Party is engaged in the "struggle against religious ideology . . . This work is coordinated and conducted by councils for atheistic education . . . a course on the foundations of scientific atheism is being taught in special secondary institutions." etc.

These are but a few recent reactions of the Soviet Union to the struggle between the Kingdom of God and the Tyranny of Communism; between Christ and Anti-Christ. A struggle which the Communist Party is more aware of than the Christians of the West, as their literature indicates.

II.

Interesting, isn't it? Since Marx there has been an active struggle against the dominion of Jesus Christ, Lord and King, and His Church. Thus we can do nothing less as His followers, than stand together with our Lord in the world He died for. In this struggle against "cosmic powers, against the authorities and potentates of this dark world, against the superhuman forces of evil in the heavens," we are to put on the armour of God and get cracking.

But we have not! The present struggle began about 1840, i.e. about the time when youthful Christians on the campuses of this country and the United Kingdom were waving their banners which bore these brave words, "The world for Christ in our lifetime." Since that time the Marxist ideology has swept the world and is presently engaged actively in opposing the Christian faith. 1984 is almost here. The year used by George Orwell as the symbol of the communist ideology's world-wide conquest. And it is almost true, but not quite for it is still God's world.

What is it that offends those who are controlled by the ideology which St. Paul would have referred to as "cosmic powers"? Very briefly it is that the faith centered upon Jesus Christ creates a unique world view, or vision in which:

1. Each individual is unique, i.e. he or she is uniquely created and uniquely redeemed.
2. This uniqueness is characterized by a unique soul or spirit which is nurtured by faith, hope, love, prayer, worship and fellowship.

As our spirit matures so is our personality intensified to the extent that it cannot be controlled by any atheistic ideology. That is why Christians such as Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Georgi Vins, Gleb Yakunin, Lech Walesa, Galina Vilchinskaya, Sergei Khodorovich, Georghe Calciu, and so many more known only unto God threaten the whole structure of the Soviet tyranny and its ideology.

The intensity of consciousness and personality is the evidence of the faith which has Jesus Christ as its centre: the faith summed up in Hebrews as, "Faith gives substance to our hopes and makes us certain of realities we do not see." It is "faith active in love" to quote from St. Paul;

faith lived out in the lives of God's people, so that they are epistles known and read of all men.

It is for faith that Sergei Khodorovich is being so cruelly treated in a Moscow prison. You may recall Andrei Kistyakovsky's statement of last April when Khodorovich was arrested. "Sergei Khodorovich was arrested for his mercy, his selflessness, his kindness, his humanity, his civic courage."

It is this faith active in love which frightens the Soviet tyranny and is classified in Soviet publications as an attack upon "socialist democracy and the USSR constitution." The struggle against believers is an authentication of their faith, and an affirmation of that misplaced faith which denies that Jesus is the Christ.

III.

The Communist leaders are much readier to identify the essential struggle of our time than the main line denominations of the West.

Malcolm Muggeridge reported the nature of this struggle in an article he wrote for a London paper in 1935 when he was the Manchester Guardian correspondent in Moscow. He was attacked by his friends and relatives as a pro-Nazi supporter.

On the 2nd of February, 1964, a group of believers from Russia, the Ukraine, and Belorussia addressed an appeal to the World Council of Churches through its executive committee which was meeting in Odessa. This appeal enumerated the violations of believers' rights. These are too numerous to mention, but in order to give some sense of them I shall quote but a few. "The officials . . . forbid children between the ages of 6 to 18 to be given communion." "In schools a furious struggle is waged against young soldiers for Christ: crosses are torn away from children, they are threatened and forbidden to attend church." Most of the practices enumerated are commonplace today, such as KGB agents in seminaries, the enslavement of collective farm workers, the closure of churches and monasteries, the threat of execution, and so on. There is one little titbit which I think should be remembered by those who may be potential guests of the Communist Party. "We cannot keep silent over the way foreign guests are hoaxed in the ideological academies. They are lavishly treated, regaled with very strong wine so that they will ask fewer questions, think and observe less."

This appeal was directed to the World Council of Churches in the expectation that it would be widely publicized. These are the actual words, "so that the Christians of the whole world would pray for us."

But the whole world did not respond, because it did not know. Presumably the executive committee of the World Council of Churches believed that it was not politically expedient to initiate such a response.

Another appeal was sent to the delegates of the 5th Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Nairobi in October 1975. It was signed by Gleb Yakunin--now in prison--and Lev Regleson. The tone of this appeal is contained in these words, " . . . only at the foot of the Cross of Golgotha can there be born a love truly passionate to overcome the strife which alienates denominations from one another, and prepare Christian hearts for genuine unity. . . The world did not hear the World Council of Churches raising its authoritative voice when the Russian Orthodox Church was half-destroyed . . . It is an imperative task for us now to restore to the whole Christian community in the world the spirit of the first Christians who revered the confessors of the faith."

Eight suggestions are made:

1) Learn about the confessing brethren of all denominations.
2) Hold regular prayer meetings.
3) Communicate with confessing Christians even if it is only in sending a Christmas card.

4) Send a letter of protest once a month to the persecutors.

5) Express our support for those of other religions who are also persecuted.

6) Demand an inspection of psychiatric hospitals; in them there is a threat to mankind no less dangerous than nuclear bombs and bacteriological warfare.

7) Work for the right of believers to emigrate, especially those who have been subject to imprisonement and constant harassment.

8) Send Bibles to the USSR.

So far as I can recall, the WCC formed a committee on human rights, but I can't recall that it did what Gleb Yakunin asked for, or what Mr. Phil Potter, the President, claimed that the Council had done. It is important, on the other hand, to remember the heroic witness of Christian fellowships within the Soviet Union and its colonies: the Russian Social Fund initiated by Alexander Solzhenitsyn in 1974; the Helsinki Watch Committees of 1975 monitoring the Helsinki Accords dealing with human rights; the formation of the Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights in the USSR; the women's committees for the familes of the persecuted. These were integrating movements indicating the affirmation of human dignity and freedom. As you know so well these forms of witness have been exremely costly.

Many of you will be familiar with similar appeals presented to the 6th Assembly of the WCC in Vancouver during the latter part of July and the early part of August. Deacon Rusak, writing from the Soviet Union, warned the Assembly against assuming that the Soviet delegation was representative of the whole body of the Russian Orthodox Church. He also asked that such conferences would "look beyond the exterior show presented by the Soviet delegations to see the tears and sufferings of the faithful." He stated the hope "that the Charter of the World Council of Churches will be expanded to contain an obligation for member churches to defend vigorously the vital principle of faith against disbelief, to defend the rights of believers wherever these rights are violated . . . The scope of my letter is nowhere near as 'global' in the issues it raises as the appeal in 1975 by Father Gleb. It is unlikely that any of the delegates in Vancouver know the tragic fate of this priest (whose appeal to the Nairobi Assembly, incidentally, was used as an indictment at his trial). Nor do I delude myself that my letter will be read out at one of the Assembly's sessions. It is very difficult for us to reach you--much, much more difficult than to reach God. Still, I dare not remain silent.

"I appeal to you . . . while I am not yet under arrest, while my small voice might reach you in the hope that learned theological discourse of global problems will not obscure from you the fate of the individual. I appeal to you in the firm conviction that the fate of every layman and every churchman is inextricably bound to the future of the Fulfilled Church.

"I believe in the Lord, I love my church, feel concern for her future and wish to serve her--but not by compromise of conscience, that price which is extracted from our church leadership and which I am being urged to pay.

"I am in total agreement with the Russian writer Anatoli Levitin-Krasnor, that it is unnecessary for the Church to board any ship when she can walk upon the waters."

The response of the Council's bureaucrats was that the WCC could not interfere in the internal affairs of other governments, and that appeals from individuals can not be dealt with in the official agenda of the Assembly.

When the hungry ask for bread do we give them a stone?

When our brothers and sisters in Christ are tortured and imprisoned do we pass by on the other side?

When the Anti-Christ threatens, do the followers of Christ forsake Him and deny that He is truly God and that he reigns in the supreme sovereignty of His love?

Believers within the Soviet Empire claim us as their brothers and sisters. We serve the same Lord and share in the same world-view. We have read these affirmations not only in appeals but in the trial records of those who accept their sentences with the statement that it cannot be otherwise because they cannot serve Anti-Christ; they will only serve Christ along with their fellow Christians in every part of the world.

We remember with humility that to confess Jesus as Lord is to share in His followers's witness to Him in every place and every time. St. John in his first letter tells us, as he once told his friends, that this is the last hour; the hour not only of revelation and the response of repentance, but the hour of commitment and renewal.

Our Lord claims the world He died for through His people. It is our task, to claim our times and our neighborhoods for Him. The mission of the Church is not a matter of committees, councils, assemblies, it is a matter of faithfulness, love and endurance, on the part of the Christian community.

Last Sunday a requiem service was held at the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, in remembrance of the 100 million people who have died during the 66 years of the Soviet Tyranny--66 years of ideological and territorial expansion. President Reagan sent a statement to be read by Philip Nicolaides in which a reference was made to the current imprisonment of Sergei Khodorovich. He was the administrator of the Russian Social Fund. This Fund, as you know, was initiated by Alexander Solzhenitsyn when he was banished from the Soviet Union in 1974. It is financed from royalties of The Gulag Archipelago, which are deposited in a Swiss bank. It was administered first of all by Alexander Ginzburg. He was imprisoned in 1977 and released, along with Georgi Vins, in exchange for two Soviet spies in 1978. Both Georgi Vins and Alexander Ginzburg spoke, by the way, at CREED's first conference two years ago. Sergei Khodorovich took over the responsibilities of the Fund and served it until he was arrested last April. As you know, the last word we had of him was that he was in the prison hospital with a fractured skull--possibly crushed--in an attempt to make him confess that he is in the service of foreign powers and that the Fund is financed by the C.I.A. His place was taken immediately by Andrei Kistyakovsky, a man who had been baptised only three years earlier. He, alas, has melanoma and has been denied treatment. His place in turn has been taken by Boris Mikhailov, a distinguished art critic.

In this continuation of this Fund, the only public charity in the Soviet Union, and in the voluntary and sacrificial leadership of its leaders, we have an example of the Church at work in the world, the Church of Jesus Christ which the forces of death shall never overpower. It is characteristic of the response of the Christians within the Communist Tyranny, and is it not an expression of the that true love which is born at the foot of the Cross of Golgotha ?

I admit that it is easier and more comfortable to pass by on the other side along with the priest and the lawyer. This is a popular response: "It isn't my business. Who am I to help those who were stupid enough to be born outside the U.S.A. Leave it to the government, and agree with the non-action of the World Council of Churches."

The evidence of crushed skulls, broken bones and flesh, torture, imprisonment and acts of humiliation is unpleasant. I remember what it is like and I'd rather forget. But I can't. The amount of evidence that crosses my desk is overwhelming and frightening. There is too much to do: too many requests to fulfill; too many impossibilities to overcome, yet I've got to do what I can.

I know that I can't go it alone, but that I can go it with God. I know that an individual mission is hopeless, but one in the fellowship of fellow Christians is hopeful. What is impossible for isolated individuals is possible with God. There is tremendous power in the Body of Christ in the world. Each member has some unique gift to use for the benefit of the whole Body. That is why I see the great mission of our time as the mission of freedom, one that is carried on day by day with the resources God provides and will provide, for the deliverance of His people and the expansion of His kingdom.

I think this conference is evidence of the response which God is initiating among His people. You are here; you care, and in your caring you will communicate your loving concern to your fellowships and friends.

The suggestions presented to the World Council of Churches in Nairobi in '75 are being carried out to some degree, and we shall improve that degree.

1) We are learning about the witnesses of every denomination within the Soviet Empire. We at CREED are interceding for over 150 of them all the way from Cuba to China. And there are so many more. Each one of them has a human face. Thus we have the obligation to witness for those who witness for God in the struggle against the principalities and powers of this world. In witnessing for them we learn of the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and learning of His grace we learn of Him at first hand.
2) We are praying for those of Christ's body who are wounded in the struggle, but we have a long way to go before every confessor

is remembered in prayer by every congregation and prayer fellowship within this country.

3) Many of you are writing to Christians within the Soviet Empire, but again, there is so much more to do, and several ways of communication. There are letters, Christmas cards, radio broadcasts, personal visits, couriers, relatives in this country and so on.

4) With regard to the request of sending letters of protest once a month we may expand this by encouraging our churches to participate as part of their missionary obligation.

5) With regard to expressing our support for those of other religions: in doing so we are but identifying ourselves with God's concern for the world His son died for. For example the witness of the Jewish community was instrumental in encouraging the Christian one. We are aware of the continuation of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. One of the most recent attacks against Soviet Jewry has come from the formation of the Anti-Zionist Committee in March of this year. Regrettably, this committee is made up of a group of high-ranking people of Jewish ancestry who are loyal to the Soviet regime.

   I think it is important for us to emphasize that the community of the Bible is unique, and uniquely engaged in God's work of deliverance.

6) The sixth suggestion, i.e. the one demanding an inspection of psychiatric hospitals is a recognition of the Soviet Union's determination to control the brains of their subjects by means of psychotropic drugs. There are 215 Soviet subjects and more of sound mind, who are confined in psychiatric institutions

mostly because they requested permission to emigrate.

7) Regarding the right of believers to emigrate we may do more than support their applications, we may act as sponsors, i.e. we may provide the invitation to come to this country, for without this invitation the process of emigration cannot be initiated. We have been asked to consider ways and means of bringing Fr. Dmitri Dudko, his wife and two teen-aged children to this country. He is one of the great preachers who has been used of the Holy Spirit to lead thousands to Christ and to strengthen the faith of many more.

8) Not only may we find ways of sending Bibles and Christian literature to the countries of the Soviet Union but we may broadcast. By means of these broadcasts people may compile their own Bibles. Two years ago Alexander Ginzburg told us at our first conference that the best means of smuggling Bibles into the Soviet Union was by means of radio. He assured us that such broadcasts would reach an audience of 30 million. Due to the help of Father Victor Potapov and the Committee for the Defense of Persecuted Orthodox Christians, CREED is initiating a series of broadcasts.

So far as CREED is concerned, it is simply a fellowship of Christians who, in fellowship with all, seek to continue the worldwide mission of the Church which began at Pentecost. It has no power but the power of God: for what is impossible for human institutions on their own is possible with God; in Christ's Body in the World there is divine power which brings repentance, reconciliation, deliverance, and renewal. It is this power, not political revolutionary power, which Andropov recognizes as the power he must destroy if he is to conquer the world for the Communist ideology. In this effort we know he is bound to fail. The evidence of this failure is becoming increasingly apparent. This does not mean ease in Zion, but rather the increase of suffering for those who stand with their Lord at the foot of the Cross of Golgotha.

Presented at CREED Conference
November 10, 1983

[Whereupon, at 5:08 p.m., the committee adjourned, subject to call of the Chair.]

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